

Hafa Adai!

D&Q: Handling was probable cause. PAGE 2
Sylvestre Sablan's murder and 'ice' cases rolled into one. PAGE 6

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75¢

PSS pays CUC \$2.7 million

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

The Public School System has presented a check worth \$2.7 million to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., clearing its outstanding balance with the CNMI's sole supplier of power.

Newly elected Board of Education chair Marylou Ada, accompanied by former board chair Herman Guerrero

**See photo
on Page 2**

and Education Commissioner Cyn-

See PSS on Page 4

Tony Sablan is new LB chief

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Former Saipan lawmaker Antonio P. Sablan was appointed as the new Legislative Bureau director effective Monday, the organizational session of the 20th Legislature. He will



Sablan

be replacing acting director Antonette R. Vilal Gomez, who would go back as the Senate's senior legal counsel.

His appointment has the unanimous support of both the House and Senate, with House Speaker Ra-

See SABLON on Page 4

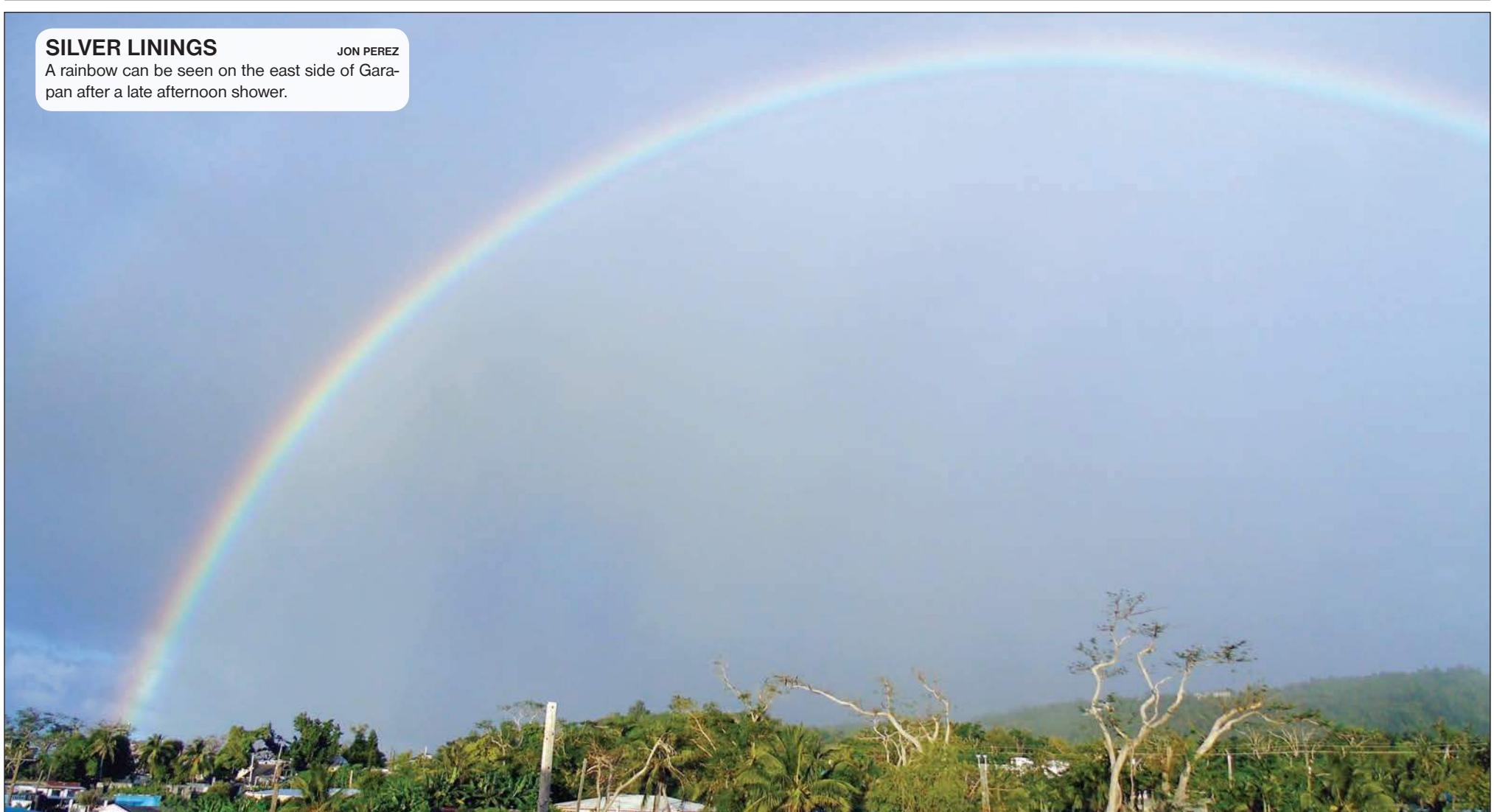
Occupancy up 6 pct. in December

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands reported 94.24 percent occupancy among 11 member hotels for December 2016, a 6-percent increase compared to December 2015.

See story on Page 8

SILVER LININGS

JON PEREZ
A rainbow can be seen on the east side of Garapan after a late afternoon shower.



INSIDE



LOCAL

Two McDonald's Saipan officers complete a course at the Hamburger University.

PAGE 5



BUSINESS

Russia allegedly has a compromising dossier on President-elect Donald Trump.

PAGE 13



ASIA

China's sole aircraft carrier was reportedly transiting the Taiwan Strait.

PAGE 16



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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Board of Education chair Marylou Ada pose for a picture as she presents the check from the Public School System to pay off the outstanding balance owed the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.



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D&Q: Handling was probable cause

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Dickerson and Quinn International Distributors, or D&Q, has responded to a video going viral on social media showing a can of Black Label luncheon meat with maggots.

Max Kretzer, resident manager of D&Q, told *Saipan Tribune* that efforts to communicate with the person who posted the video on a social media site have already been made.

D&Q distributes Black Label in the CNMI.

"I spoke to the lady that had it [video] and explained to her that what happened is very rare. We haven't had [something] like this in years. When items travel around, sometimes with a little bit of a hard knock or something, the seal at the top of the can get a slight [dent] via transit," explained Kretzer.

Michelle Olita reportedly bought the canned meat product from 999 Market last Dec. 26 and was looking forward to consuming it on Jan. 2.

"[D&Q] offered to give me a complimentary case of Black Label luncheon meat. ... I am not sure yet if I want to get it," said Olita.

Kretzer said 999 Market does not buy from D&Q directly. Kretzer believes 999 Market bought the product from a bigger store that was buying from D&Q, which resulted in more handling than usual, thus producing the dent that allowed contaminants to enter.

"It's been in our warehouse and the bigger stores' warehouse before going to the smaller stores. It gets loaded and unloaded repeatedly," said Kretzer.

"The product is made in the U.S. so it is not coming from some questionable origin. It is, unfortunately, one of the very rare occasions that something like this happens," he said.

"It doesn't happen often and it happens with different products from time to time—very rare but it does happen," he added.

Olita said she is still thinking whether to accept the offer of a case of canned meat due to all the negative things she has been hearing from her peers.

According to Kretzer: "There is nothing [D&Q] could really do about that, but I did contact the lady that had it and explained to her what the problem was. I suggested that if she had concerns, I offered her another case of Black Label—not for any other reason but just to get her confidence back and not feel she has got anything to be concerned about the product,"

"She hasn't taken me up on the offer yet, but the offer still stands," he added.

The video of maggots in the meat went viral on social media since being posted on Jan. 6. It has garnered more than 30,000 views and a little less than 800 shares as of 8pm last night.

Most food products in the Commonwealth are imported, brought in by plane or refrigerated containers.

Still mourning Apatang returns to work



Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang.
MARK RABAGO

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang is still grieving his wife's Tonie's passing, but has hunkered down and came back to work at the helm of the Saipan Mayor's Office.

In fact, unknown to many, the mayor immediately went back to the office the day after he arrived on Dec. 23, while escorting Tonie's remains back on island for burial. That was Christmas Eve.

"I'm back and even though I'm still mourning I try to get over that by doing my work. I just go visit my wife at the cemetery everyday," Apatang told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said a lot of rumors cropped up during his nearly two-month leave, the most preposterous of which is that he himself is sick and had to go off-island for treatment.

Customs chief mulls new trainees

Division of Customs Services director Jose C. Mafnas is already thinking of recruiting and training a new batch of officers to further beef up their personnel due to a further increase in tourist activity. South Korean airline t'way began their non-stop flights to Saipan last month while the inaugural flight of Hong Kong Express starts on Jan. 17.

Mafnas said having new air carriers opening up flights to

medical referral in Hawaii.

"Even when I was away, the people here, the mayor's staff, were still here doing their responsibilities. They can see them all over the island. They go out under the sun all day long from 8 o'clock in the morning until 4:30pm they're working hard for the people of the community."

On Tudela, Apatang said, "We communicated well. She calls me and I call the office almost every day also while I was in Hawaii to see what was going on. She advised me

on what's happening and we pretty much worked together."

The mayor said his office intends to continue its beautification projects on Saipan, knowing that an unkempt environment is a sure way of driving away visitors.

"Our major activities here are beautification of the island and trying to keep the island as clean as much as possible," he said.

One such plan on the pipeline is to improve the flowerbeds around the roads' center islands and replace the cut

up water bottles that hold the flowers with something more permanent and attractive.

Apatang also wants to make the trail to Old Man by The Sea more accessible by building a parking lot near the site.

"Right now tourists have to park their cars on the side of the road and walk all the way down there. What I'm trying to do is come up with a plan. Public Lands already made a survey down there and we're going to put a parking lot so tourists can park their vehicles and walk the path down

there. I'm still working with regulatory agencies that are in charge of permitting those activities," he said.

Apatang emphasized, though, that his beautification plans wouldn't bear fruit without the cooperation of other government agencies.

"I will be working with Public Works, Parks and Rec[reation], and the Marianas Visitors Authority in doing all these beautification projects. We work together and cooperate as a team," he said.

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ABTC pledges to work closely with CCC, IPI

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Commerce Secretary Mark O. Rabauliman said they have already ironed out the mix up that took place a few months ago involving one of their personnel from the Alcoholic Beverage and Tobacco Control at the Best Sunshine Live temporary training facility.

The ABTC personnel allegedly tried to open every door

inside the casino premises inside the T Galleria mall in Garapan in search of a business license.

Rabauliman said it was just a simple misunderstanding and confusion. "ABTC has its own mandate and so does the [Commonwealth] Casino Commission. We are both enforcement agencies."

"We already had a meeting where I brought my entire ABTC enforcement team to

talk with our counterparts at the commission. We had the chance to meet and talk to each other so we could have a clear understanding of our respective mandates."

Rabauliman said they plan to meet regularly with casino commission officials in order to work closely on issues involving alcohol and tobacco. "We must know how we could assist each other rather than stepping over each other's foot, because at the end of the day, we all work in the same government; we enforce similar rules. They are in the money management side while we are in ABTC enforcement side. Everything now has been cleared up and we had already established communication for a better working relationship."

CCC executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero echoed the same sentiment, saying they also wanted to focus more on interagency cooperation with ABTC and other enforcement divisions of the government.

"Whether you are with [the Department of Public Safety], Customs, ABTC, [Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality], we're all in the same government and are enforcing the same CNMI laws and other regulations."

"Our presence in the casino is 24-7. So, if you have any

issue in terms of regulatory responsibility in the licensee's premises, we are present there as a government agency. We are working together. Our resources are at the disposal of any regulatory agency."

"We had already discussed interagency cooperation for day-to-day enforcement. Before we give the green light to open the facility, we asked them to submit any regulatory requirement."

Joint DPS-PSS training builds relationships

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety and the Public School System have partnered for a training program that teaches police officers and school administrators how to be school resource officers.

The five-day training program, ending this Friday, will teach the 31 attendees how to become school resource officers, or SROs.

An SRO does not only secure the safety and wellbeing of the students, but also build relationships with the students and their family.

Matt Liston, an SRO supervisor of an SRO unit in Wichita, Kansas, and Erick Resendiz, of another unit, are spearheading the training program by the National Association of School Resource Officers, or NASRO.

This is the first time Saipan is hosting a program such as this.

"We [try to get them] to implement what they know about law enforcement and being a patrol officer in a school full time, as well as being a counselor," said Liston.

Liston said the job of an SRO extends beyond just providing security.

"An SRO is someone who builds relationships with students, somebody that is there and a friend to them," said Liston. "At times, when the



Representatives of both the Public School System and the Department of Public Safety attend the training program to certify them as school resource officers, an officer of the school that extends beyond providing security to students.

ERWIN ENCINARES

student go home, we see the family as well. SROs also go into the community because parents are just as part of the school as the student is, so the SRO also becomes a resource for their families as well."

Cherlyn Cabrera, principal of Marianas High School, the school with the highest student population, supports the idea of SROs.

"We have training for police officers, certifying them to be school resource officers. SROs are assigned to different schools. For the Public School System, they are assigned to middle schools and our high schools. [The training] is also for our school leadership – we

find out what are its benefits and what are the different ways SROs are helpful to the school and the students," she said.

Cabrera understands the importance of programs such as this for DPS officers, especially

considering how adolescents tend to think differently.

"They are not just there to prevent crimes and for security. They are there to build positive relationships. I am excited that the police officers here are getting this training because some of them will be assigned to schools," said Cabrera.

Cabrera commended the efforts of PSS and DPS.

"I am glad PSS and DPS partnered together for this.

PSS

From Page 1

thia Deleon Guerrero, presented the check to CUC interim executive director Gary Camacho last Jan. 10.

"We are very pleased that we paid off the outstanding balance owed to CUC. We are extremely grateful to the Legislature, the Department

of Finance, and Gov. Ralph DLG Torres for including the payment to CUC as part of the \$10 million appropriation to PSS," said Ada, referring to the supplemental appropriations provided to PSS and other government agencies.

Now that the balance to CUC has been settled, PSS expects that it will now be able to function smoother, Ada said.

"We can now direct our fo-

cus on improvements to our public schools," she added.

CUC sued PSS, the CNMI central government, and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., back in 2013 for failing to pay over \$5.9 million, \$1.2 million, and \$9.6 million, respectively, for utility services.

PSS agreed with CUC to pay \$100,000 monthly starting last Nov. 25, 2015. With the recent payment of \$2.7 mil-

The more training we have, the better we get at our jobs. We are trying to see how we can build relationships with students and how we could help them in a very deep way," she said.

lion, an overpayment amounting to \$263,797.91 would be applied to the current billing for the month.

PSS received more than \$10.2 million in supplemental appropriations due to the recent signing of House Bill 19-212 into law last Dec. 19, 2016, appropriating almost \$41 million in supplemental funding to various government agencies, including CHCC.

SABLAM

From Page 1

fael S. Demapan (R-Saipan) and Senate President Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan) signing the official document naming him to the post.

Sablam just moved to the other side of the building. He was a member of the 19th Legislature where he served as the Ways and Means Committee chairman. He lost his reelection bid, finishing eighth among 11 candidates for the six Precinct 1 slots.

Article 2, Section 17 (a) of the CNMI Constitution states that the presiding

officers of the House and Senate would jointly appoint the LB director.

"The leadership of the House and Senate of the 20th Legislature hereby jointly appoint you to be the [Legislative Bureau director] effective Jan. 9, 2017," said Demapan and Palacios in Sablaman's appointment letter.

"We are confident that you will provide equitable services to all members of the Legislature. And we look forward to a concerted and collaborative work with the Legislature."

Sablam thanked the 20th Legislature's leadership for choosing him to lead the bureau, which is tasked to

provide services to both the House and Senate during every session and committee meetings, and records keeping of all documents related to legislative work.

"I thank the leadership for their support as I assume the Legislative Bureau director post. I am honored for the opportunity they had given me to serve in the capacity to head the bureau," Sablaman told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

Sablam said he would look into some documents in the coming days to see the needs of the bureau. "We have one mission here and that is to provide service and support to all the House and Senate members."

"I will take the next couple of days in reviewing the bureau's current situation and status. I'm starting to look at some documents to see what are the needs of our staff," said Sablaman, who added that they would have their first staff meeting tomorrow at 9:30am.

Friday's meeting would just be a formality since Sablaman knows all the staff after working with them in past legislatures. "We're going to meet all the staff on Friday. Basically it's just a formal introduction."

"I just want them to share some of their immediate concerns and see where we can go from there. We just want to maximize our level

of service to all the members of the House and Senate," Sablaman said.

Senate committee heads

Palacios also released last Tuesday the appointment of the chairmen of the nine committees in the Senate.

Senate floor leader Francisco M. Borja (R-Tinian) will head the committees on Resources, Economic Development, and Programs along with the Federal Relations and Independent Agencies, replacing Palacios in the latter.

Senate legislative secretary Sen. Justo S. Quitugua (Ind-Saipan) will remain as chairman of the Education

and Youth Affairs Committee while adding Rules and Procedures to his care. Sen. Sixto K. Igisomar (R-Saipan) will stay with the Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communications Committee while also leading the Health and Welfare Committee.

Senate vice president Steve K. Mesngon (R-Rota) is the new Judiciary, Government, and Law chairman, while Tinian Sens. Francisco Q. Cruz and Jude U. Hofschneider will continue to head the committees on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations, and Fiscal Affairs, respectively.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
McDonald's Saipan managers Joe E. Ayuyu Jr. and Jocelyn Asistores show off their diplomas after completing the General Managers Business Leadership Capstone in Hamburger University, Oak Brook, IL.

Two McDonald's managers complete leadership course

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

Two McDonald's Saipan officers recently completed a business management course at the Hamburger University in Oak Brook, Illinois.

McDonald's Saipan general manager Joe Ayuyu Jr. and Jocelyn Asistores finished what is called the General Managers Business Leadership Capstone.

In order to be able to attend the course, a manager must be able to meet certain milestones within their branches of management in all areas of the restaurant.

The one-week general management course, open to McDonald's employees, "technically certifies us to be general managers," said Ayuyu.

"My favorite thing about

the class is learning about other people's experiences," he said.

The university is directly affiliated with McDonald's.

Ayuyu said he learned a lot because "we are all in a very similar setting. McDonald's is very well known for uniformity. Asistores and I brought our experience from way out here [on] Saipan," he said.

Ayuyu said he was able to pick up a few ideas that have been implemented in other McDonald's branches around the world and is looking to apply those that he deems are effective to the local scene.

The Hamburger University focuses on restaurant management. The 130,000 square foot training facility in Chicago was designed specifically for McDonald's personnel.

Hillbroom's request for more time OK'd

The federal court has granted Junior Larry Hillbroom's request for more time to respond to the motions filed by his two former lawyers that he is suing.

At a hearing on Tuesday, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona granted Hillbroom's motion for more time.

Hillbroom's former counsels, David J. Lujan and Barry Israel, have pending motions in connection with Hillbroom's lawsuit against them.

The minutes of Tuesday's hearing showed that Hillbroom's counsel, Rachel Dimitruk, also discussed the status of Hillbroom's pending cases in Palau.

Dimitruk disclosed that Bill Ridpath, the Palau attorney for Hillbroom, provided her with the updates.

Dimitruk said that Hillbroom's trial in Palau set for Dec. 19, 2016, was cancelled due to discovery issues.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Joe E. Ayuyu Jr. poses with his Gold Hat Award. Ayuyu was chosen by his peers as someone who they think contributed a lot to their learning during their time at Hamburger University.

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Sylvestre Sablan's murder and 'ice' cases rolled into one

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A Superior Court judge had agreed to roll into one Sylvestre R. Sablan's murder case and his methamphetamine or "ice" possession case.

Sylvestre R. Sablan is accused of killing his wife.

Associate Judge Teresa K. Kim-Tenorio granted yesterday the government's motion to consolidate Sablan's murder case and his "ice" possession case.

Kim-Tenorio ruled that while there was insufficient showing that the charges in the two cases warrant consolidation under the "common scheme or plan" prong, consolidation was proper under the "same or similar character" prong.

Kim-Tenorio found that factors such as the temporary proximity of the acts and the likelihood and extent of evidentiary overlap weighed in favor of consolidation.

Moroever, the judge found

that consolidation is appropriate because of the lack of actual prejudice on Sablan.

The two cases both stemmed from events on the evening of April 18 and early morning of April 19, 2015.

The Office of the Attorney General charged Sablan with one count of illegal possession of a controlled substance and three counts of disturbing the peace.

In the second case, the OAG charged him with second-degree murder, assault with a

dangerous weapon, and aggravated assault and battery.

The OAG then filed a motion to consolidate the two cases. Kim-Tenorio heard the motion last Dec. 7.

Assistant attorney general Chester Hinds argued that both cases are logically related and have overlapping evidence that includes blood, potential witness testimony, and Sablan's own statements.

Chief Public Defender Douglas Hartig, counsel for Sablan, opposed the motion,

contesting the existence of a causal link between charges in the two cases. He further argued that consolidation would cause prejudice and potentially confuse the jury.

In her order yesterday, Kim-Tenorio said the Commonwealth Rules of Criminal Procedure allows consolidation if the offenses charged are of the same or similar, are based on the same act or transaction, or are connected through a common scheme or plan.

Kim-Tenorio determined that there is no showing that the charges of second-degree murder, assault with a dangerous weapon or aggravated assault and battery against Ana Maria Pialur Limes led to disturbing the peace against multiple victims and illegal possession of a controlled substance, or vice versa.

Instead, the judge pointed out, the Commonwealth's discussion of relatedness focused on temporal proximity and overlapping evidence—which is more appropriate for the "same or similar character" prong of Rule 8(a) of the Commonwealth Rules of Criminal Procedure.

Accordingly, Kim-Tenorio said, there is an insufficient showing that the charges in the two cases are connected through a common plan or scheme.

The murder case allegedly occurred on or between April 18 and April 19, 2015, while the "ice" case allegedly occurred on April 19, 2015.

Kim-Tenorio said the government intends to prove that Sablan committed the alleged murder on the same night, before he was arrested

for illegal possession of a controlled substance and disturbing the peace.

The government alleged that after committing the murder, Sablan walked around San Jose Village and created a disturbance. Due to that disturbance, police officers responded to complaints, observed the defendant holding a small bag containing "ice" and arrested him.

Kim-Tenorio ruled that the short span between these events weighs in favor of consolidation.

At the hearing, Hinds stated that they intend to introduce evidence in both cases such as Sablan's statements, potential testimony of police officers, potential testimony of other witnesses, defendant's state of mind on the night in question, and blood evidence.

The judge said Hinds argued that the evidence could not be separated because evidence that proves one case supports or is linked to evidence in the other case.

"This overlapping evidence also weighs in favor of consolidation," Kim-Tenorio said.

Kim-Tenorio is also not persuaded that Sablan will suffer actual prejudice with the consolidation.

The judge added that judicial economy weighs in favor of joinder.

Limes, 52, a former staff assistant of Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), was found dead inside her house in Oleai/San Jose on April 20, 2015, at noon. Autopsy showed that she died of a skull fracture due to blunt force trauma.

Saipan Sea Ventures files for bankruptcy

Saipan Sea Ventures Inc. has the dubious distinction of being the first to submit a bankruptcy petition before the U.S. District Court for the NMI this year.

Saipan Sea Ventures Inc. president Margaret Pellegrino, through counsel Alexis Fallon, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

» Creditor CPA has \$331,000 in unsecured claims

Saipan Sea Ventures has a lease agreement with CPA for space at the Port of Saipan, generally known as Delta Dock.

According to Fallon, Delta Dock was affected by Typhoon Souledor and needs to be repaired.

Last April, a boat owner filed a lawsuit against Saipan Sea Ventures and Saipan USA Fisheries Inc. after a boat got loose and struck his moored vessel at the Port of Saipan at the height of Typhoon Souledor last Aug. 2.

Last year, only four bankruptcy cases were filed in the district court. (Ferdie de la Torre)

2 suspected 'ice' traffickers arrested

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Two alleged traffickers of methamphetamine or "ice" on Saipan were arrested on Tuesday.

Derek Camacho Reyes, 35, and Raymond Yokota Dador, 29, were arrested for trafficking of a controlled substance and possession of a controlled substance.

At a hearing yesterday, Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio kept the \$100,000 cash bail that the court earlier im-

posed on each defendants.

Preliminary hearing for Reyes will be on Jan. 20 at 9am; Dador's is on Jan. 18 at 9am.

Assistant public defender Nancy Dominski was appointed as counsel for Reyes and Dador. Assistant attorney general Chester Hinds appeared for the government.

Hinds in court documents disclosed that CNMI Drug Enforcement Task Force officer Roque K. Camacho arrested Reyes on Dec. 10, 2016.

Upon his arrest, Reyes told

law enforcers that he will serve as a confidential informant in exchange for his release without cash bail.

The court granted the government's request to seal the case against Reyes and release him. Yet Reyes has not cooperated with law enforcement in ongoing investigations.

The court granted the government's request to unseal the case and revoke Reyes' release. This led to his re-arrest.

Camacho said their cooperating source managed to purchase \$40 worth of "ice" from Dador during a "buy-walk" operation at her house in Finasisi last Nov. 25.

Camacho said Reyes assisted them in conducting a controlled buy-walk operation against his "ice" source last Dec. 10.

Camacho said after the arrest of the alleged "ice" supplier, a Chinese national, Reyes stopped providing valuable information and resorted to selling drugs.

In Dador's case, task force officer Rudolph C. Sablan Jr. stated in his report that a co-operating defendant was able to buy \$40 worth of "ice" from Dador during a "buy-walk" operation at her house in Finasisi last Nov. 25.



Volunteers of PDM Promoters, Inc.'s monthly cleanup pose for a group photo after they conducted a recent cleanup of Paseo de Marianas. The non-profit hauled a total of 8,980 lbs of trash in 2016.

PDM Promoters collects nearly 9K in 2016

PDM Promoters, Inc.'s monthly cleanup of the surrounding environs of Paseo de Marianas collected nearly 9,000 lbs of trash, according to coordinator Sonia Siwa.

She said the largest trash haul happened in January 2016 with 1,180 lbs of trash collected. It was followed by February and November, which were tied with 1,020 lbs of trash collected.

The rest of the months saw PDM Promoters collect the following amount of trash: March (840 lbs); April (640 lbs); May (480 lbs); June (920 lbs); July (600 lbs); August (700 lbs); September (669 lbs); October (340 lbs); and December (580 lbs) for a grand total of 8,980 lbs collected in 2016.

Siwa said volunteers during the year came from Kinpachi Restaurant and members of

the Saipan Awaodori Team. On occasion, staff from the Division and Parks & Recreation and policemen assigned at the Koban Station at the Paseo de Marianas also helped in the cleanup.

PDM Promoters' monthly cleanups are held every Sunday and are supported by the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality. Siwa said BECQ helps PDM Promoters

by waiving the trash fee at the Marpi landfill.

PDM Promoters has two major sponsors: T-Galleria and TSL Foundation.

"Their support enables us to have the cleaning materials for our monthly cleanups. Kinpachi Restaurant provides the meal and snacks for the volunteers," said Siwa.

Volunteers of PDM Promoters will be at it again this Jan. 21 when they conduct their first monthly cleanup of the year. (Mark Rabago)

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

petitions allows a debtor to enter into an agreement with creditors under which all or part of the business continues. Chapter 11's objective is to adjust and reorganize a debtor's obligations so as to allow the business to continue.

Fallon said Saipan Sea Ventures' estimated assets are between \$500,001 and \$1 million and estimated liabilities are also between \$500,001 and \$1 million. The estimated number of creditors is between one and 49.

On the list of 20 creditors

Demapan vows to continue mentor Sablan's work

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan) knows he has big shoes to fill as the new chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, the tax writing committee of the CNMI House of Representatives that has jurisdiction over all revenue-generating bills.

Former representative Antonio P. Sablan is the former Ways and Means chairman, introducing funding bills and other related measures in the last legislature. He is now the Legislative Bureau director.

Demapan said he is thankful for having the chance to sit beside Sablan in the 19th Legislature and for being a

member of the committee that the veteran lawmaker headed. "The seating arrangement in the 19th had me sitting beside [Sablan] and it was a privilege for me," said Demapan. "I learned a lot from him regarding the budget process and other things related to funding after being a member of his committee. I really have very big shoes to fill."

Demapan vowed to follow what he had learned from Sablan and continue the work that he has done in the Legislature. "It is my intention to continue the great work of my predecessor, former Ways and Means chair Tony [Sablan]. He has worked tirelessly to ensure the timely passage of the annual budget bill for two straight years.

Rare Guam kingfisher dies at zoo

WASHINGTON (AP)—A rare bird has died at the Smithsonian National Zoo's Bird House.

Zoo officials said in a statement that the Guam kingfisher died Saturday at the age of 17. The zoo says the bird was one of only 146 members of its species in the entire world.

The *Washington Post* reports that Guam's kingfisher population suffered after the brown tree snake

was accidentally introduced to the Pacific island shortly after the World War II. By the early 1980s, only about 30 remained. The threat of extinction spurred vigorous efforts at conservation.

At present, the Guam kingfisher only exists in captivity.

The zoo says that while the recently deceased bird didn't help produce any chicks, he was "a terrific ambassador for his species."

"[And] I will be sure to reach out to my Senate counterpart in the coming days to discuss ideas and best practices in preparation for next fiscal year's budget process," Demapan added.

Sen. Jude U. Hofsneider (R-Tinian) is the chairman of the Fiscal Affairs Committee, the Ways and Means' counterpart in the Senate.

Demapan said his priority in the 20th Legislature is to make sure that government finances would remain transparent.

"It becomes more imperative for us to ensure that government funds are spent prudently and justly while we continue to appreciate the upward trend of government revenues," added Demapan, who first ran for a House seat in the 19th Legislature.

He would also meet with Finance Secretary Larissa Larson, special assistant for management and budget Virginia Villagomez, and other key administration officials to discuss the Commonwealth's

financial status.

"Over the past two years, I focused my energy on upholding the terms of our Covenant, standing up against federal overreach, advocating for competitive wages, pushing for increased benefits for veterans, and safeguarding the hard-earned pension of our retirees," said Demapan.

"I will certainly continue to stay on top of these critical issues over the next two years. We must continue to believe in the economic future of our Com-

monwealth as we set our sights to a more robust outlook."

He thanked the people of Saipan's Precinct 1 for the chance to serve them again. "As we begin a new chapter in our Commonwealth's history, my family and I are truly humbled by this privilege to serve a second term as a member of the 20th House of Representatives. We are sincerely grateful for the confidence of our supporters, family, friends and the campaign committee."

SS covers you even when abroad

By NICOLE TIGGEMANN
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Social Security has you covered, even outside our nation's borders. We're with you through life's journey, even if you're traveling outside the United States. Many people who travel or live outside the country receive some kind of Social Security benefit, including retired and disabled workers, as well as spouses, widows, widowers and children.

If you're a U.S. citizen, you may receive your Social Security payments outside the U.S. as long as you are eligible. When we say you are "outside the U.S.", we mean you're not in one of the 50 states, the

District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands or American Samoa. Once you've been outside the U.S. for at least 30 days in a row, we consider you to be outside the country. Whether you're off to Europe, or considering a stay in our newly reopened neighbor, Cuba, you may be able to receive your Social Security benefits even while you're outside the U.S.. If you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), you cannot receive benefits if you're outside of the U.S. for a month or more.

If you're traveling outside the U.S. for an extended amount of time, it's important that you tell Social Security

the date you plan to leave and the date you plan to come back, no matter how long you expect your travel to last.

You can use this online tool to find out if you can continue to receive your Social Security benefits if you are outside the U.S. or are planning to go outside the U.S. at www.socialsecurity.gov/international/payments_outsideUS.html.

This tool will help you find out if your retirement, disability or survivor's payments will continue as long as you are eligible, stop after six consecutive calendar months, or if certain country-specific restrictions apply.

When you live outside the U.S., we send you a questionnaire periodically. Your answers will help us figure out

if you still are eligible for benefits. Return the questionnaire to the office that sent it as soon as possible. If you don't, your payments will stop. In addition to responding to the questionnaire, notify us promptly about changes that could affect your payments.

You can also read the publication titled Your Payments While You Are Outside the United States at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

Securing today and tomorrow is our priority, no matter where you might be living.

This was prepared by the Social Security Administration. For fast answers to specific Social Security questions, contact Social Security toll-free at 800-772-1213 or visit www.socialsecurity.gov.

**BUY FUEL.
PAY BILLS.**
**Congratulations to
this weeks winners!**

Mary Joy P. Perez, Susan S. Pascual, Clarie Kosack, Winnie T. Chong, Kaigi Lin, Pauline G. Sangalang, Jocelyn Q. Mandapat, Lucky 7 #6*****20410, Polly Ann Pangelinan Dela Cruz, Lucky 7 #6*****65421, Hector Sablan, Lucky 7 #6*****22537, Sung Sil Hong, Meriam T. Cabading, Marvin C. Palacios, Esther C. Suzuki, Ronald SN. Gabionza, Eleonor B. Pixley, James A. Santos, Lucky 7 #6*****66182



HANMI occupancy up 6 percent in December

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands reported 94.24 percent occupancy among 11 member hotels for December 2016, a 6-percent increase compared to December 2015.

A total of 67,734 of 71,874

available room nights sold in December 2016, compared to 63,208 of 71,579 available room nights sold over the

same period last year.

Average room rates were \$148.16 during the month, compared to \$142.89 last

December.

"Overall, visitor arrivals increased 25 percent in December, largely from the family market of Korea, and that is also reflected in an increase in hotel occupancy rates," said HANMI chair Gloria Cavanagh.

In calendar year 2016, the average occupancy rate is 87.63 percent, while the average room rate is \$140.12. This compares to calendar year 2015, when the average occupancy rate was 87.20 and the average room rate was \$132.93. The statistics are based on 11 member hotels of HANMI representing a majority of hotel rooms in the Northern Marianas.

HANMI also recorded increase in the number of U.S.-eligible employees over the calendar year. In December 2015, HANMI-member hotels employed 1,633 employees: 684 NMI/U.S. employees, 80 Freely Associated States employees, and 869 foreign contract workers. As for December 2016, HANMI employed a total of 1,668 employees: 741 NMI/U.S. employees, 107 Freely Associated States employees, and 820 foreign contract workers.

"HANMI is among many tourism-based businesses sustaining the CNMI economy

that are diligently working toward educating and employing more local and other U.S.-eligible employees," said Cavanagh. "However, it remains clear that our operations are still very much dependent on CW-visa workers. We strongly support H.R. 339 introduced this week by [Delegate] Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) that will allow these businesses to continue to retain valuable, experienced employees under the CW visa program, and we look forward to working with the federal government toward a more permanent resolution to this issue in the year ahead."

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands was established in 1985 as a professional forum for the hospitality industry of the NMI. HANMI also makes regular charitable donations to support non-profit organizations and tourism-related government projects.

Membership in HANMI is open to all qualified hotels, motels, guest houses and other lodging entities for tourists, as well as affiliated businesses. Applications for 2017 membership are now being accepted. For more information or to request a membership application, visit www.saipanhoteles.org. (HANMI)

GMS presents *Into the Woods Part 2* this Sunday



The cast and crew of *Into the Woods Musical Play Part 2* have their picture taken.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Green Meadow School's Theatre Arts Club will stage *Into the Woods Part 2* this Sunday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. Show time is at 5pm.

Into the Woods is a modern twist on the beloved Grimm fairy tales in a musical format. It follows the classic tales of Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and the

Beanstalk, and Rapunzel—all tied together by an original story involving a baker and his wife, their wish to begin a family, and their interaction with the witch who has put a curse on them.

GMS student will be performing the second part of the tale. Twenty students from third to sixth grade classes have signed up for this year's musical. Re-

hearsals were done for one and a half hours every day since October last year.

"These students had been working hard to give their audience a worthwhile performance," said *Into the Woods Part 2* producer and GMS principal Milagros Songcuan.

Tickets are available for \$10 for adults, \$5 for ages 5-10, and free for children who are 4 years old and

younger. Proceeds from this event will be used to build middle school classrooms in preparation for the next school year. The weekend event will also feature dance and song numbers by GMS Kindergarten and elementary students, parents, and other guest performers.

For tickets inquiry and for more information, call 235-2185 for reservations. (PR)

PIC Duck Race for Cancer on Feb. 8

Pacific Islands Club Saipan will hold its 9th Annual PIC Duck Race for Cancer on Feb. 8 starting at 6pm at the San Antonio resort.

Like previous years PIC Saipan will launch 2,500 rub-

ber ducks into the Lazy River, said Brad Ruszala, PIC's Sports, Entertainment and Activities director.

"You can purchase a little rubber ducky for \$5. Your ducky will be one of 2,500 rubber duckies that we'll put in the PIC Lazy River on Saturday, Feb. 4. We'll turn on the water pumps to speed the little guys along and the first duck to complete one lap around the river earns its owner \$2,500," said Ruszala.

The owner of the second rubber duck to cross the finish line gets \$300, third place pockets \$200, and fourth place get to take home \$50.

Proceeds from the annual PIC Duck Race will once again be donated to the Commonwealth Cancer Association. CCA uses the funds to help those fighting cancer in the CNMI and to help raise awareness so future generations can live cancer-free.

"The best part about it is the rest of the money raised will be donated to the Commonwealth Cancer Association during the Marianas March Against Cancer this spring," said Ruszala.

For more information about the 9th Annual PIC Duck Race, call Keoni Ichihara at 237-5174 or email keoni.ichihara@pic-saipan.com. (Mark Rabago)



PORT CALL

Personnel of the Marianas Visitors Authority hand out flyers to tourist disembarking from the cruise line Costa Atlantica, which made a port call on Saipan on Jan. 7.

ERWIN ENCINARES

IN ARTICLE 12 LAWSUIT VS ANAKS HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION

Transfer of interest in lot where Anaks is located is restrained

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_deltorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja has restrained the Manuel S. and Luise P. Villagomez family trust from transferring any interest in a lot where the Anaks Ocean View Hill Saipan condominium is situated.

Naraja, however, ordered Anaks Investors LLC post \$50,000 to be used to pay costs and damages should it later be determined that the Anaks Ocean View Hill Saipan Homeowner's Association

and/or the Manuel S. and Luise P. Villagomez family trust were wrongfully enjoined.

The judge said Anaks Investors LLC must submit the \$50,000 to the clerk of court on or before yesterday, Wednesday.

Naraja issued the order in granting Anaks Investors LLC's application for a preliminary injunction in connection with its Article 12 lawsuit against the homeowner's association and the trust.

Naraja determined that all factors used to analyze whether a preliminary injunction should be issued weigh in

favor of Anaks Investors LLC.

The judge said the status quo should be preserved so that the judicial process can play out and the rights of all the parties can be determined.

Naraja said he appreciates the burden being placed on the homeowner's association and trust and recognizes that should it later be found that they were wrongfully enjoined, they would likely be entitled to costs and damages.

Yet Naraja is not convinced that Anaks Investors LLC should have to post the full purchase price as security, since the point of ordering security is only to secure payment of costs and damages.

Naraja said it seems unlikely that in the event that Anaks Investors LLC was found to have wrongfully enjoined the homeowner's association and trust that the damages would be measured at such a high amount.

Naraja said that \$50,000 is appropriate.

In its lawsuit, Anaks Investors LLC, through coun-

sel Daniel Guidotti, asked the court to declare the lease where Anaks Ocean View Hill is located to be void because it violates Article 12.

Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution restricts land ownership in the CNMI to "persons of Northern Marianas descent."

On Dec. 9, 2015, Anaks Investors LLC offered to buy the trust's interest in the lot where the Anaks Ocean View Hill is located for \$1,973,200.

Anaks Ocean View Hill is a condominium-style residential development that consists of 131 residential units plus common areas.

Guidotti asked the court to enjoin the homeowner's association and the trust from consummating any transaction, premised on the lease's section 26 right of first refusal.

The homeowner's association operates the Anaks Ocean View Hill. The trust owns the reversionary interest in the lot.

Naraja heard last Dec. 22 Anaks Investors LLC's motion to convert the temporary

restraining order that the court earlier issued into a preliminary injunction. He later placed the matter under advisement.

At the hearing, Guidotti argued for Anaks Investors LLC. Attorneys Jennifer Dockter and Mark Scoggins represented the homeowner's association. Attorney Michael Evangelista argued as counsel for the trust.

Guidotti argued that a preliminary injunction is necessary because the homeowner's association and trust could complete a transaction for the lot at any moment.

Guidotti pointed out that once a transfer takes place it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to unwind any such transaction.

Guidotti contended that a preliminary injunction is warranted because the status quo needs to be preserved so that all the parties' rights can be justly determined.

Dockter and Evangelista asserted that there are various procedural and standing defects that should bar Anaks Investor LLC's claims.

In granting the motion, Naraja said the homeowner's association and trust's threshold challenge that Anaks Investors LLC did not properly apply for a preliminary injunction does not persuade the court to rule on the substance of Anaks Investors LLC's application.

Naraja said it appears that Anaks Investors LLC's likelihood of success as to invalidating the homeowner's association's ability to control a reversionary interest appears high.

At this stage, Naraja said, he is not definitely ruling and/or fully analyzing the claims, but is merely looking at the face of the parties' submissions and seeing if it seems likely that Anaks Investors LLC would be successful.

The judge noted that examining the face of the parties' submissions it appears that the homeowner's association is a non-Northern Marianas descent whose lease contains a provision that would allow it to impermissibly acquire a long-term interest in the lot.

CRIME OF THE WEEK

Attempted robbery at Grand Poker

Crime Stoppers is seeking the public's help for an attempted robbery and criminal mischief incident that occurred at Grand Poker, Chalan Pale Arnold Highway, Gualo Rai.

On Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2017, at about 4:48am, police responded to an attempted robbery at the Grand Poker. Police learned from the cashier, a 42-year-old woman, that she first saw the suspect on the poker room's CC television. The suspect walked into the poker room and toward the cashier booth. The cashier was locked inside the cashier booth. The suspect said, "Open the door! All I want is the money." The cashier dialed "911" reporting the crime to police.

The suspect kicked the cashier booth's door several times in an attempt to open the door. The suspect struck the cashier booth door repeatedly with the hammer and axe but was unable to gain entry. The suspect walked up to the cashier booth window and struck

it several times with both the axe and hammer. After continuous attempts of kicking, striking the cashier booth door and window with the axe and hammer, the suspect exited the front door.

No money was taken and no one was injured during the attack. The cashier booth door and glass window were damaged by the suspect who is described as about 5'4 to 5'6 tall, medium build, wearing a light colored long sleeve sweater with a hoodie covering his head, black cloth covering his face, a pair of dark baggy long pants, a pair of black shoes, an axe in one hand, and a hammer in the other.

DPS and Crime Stoppers need your help. Please contact the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272 should you want to remain anonymous or use our website at www.nmicrimestoppers.net. Crime Stoppers pays up to \$1,000 for any information leading to an arrest. It pays to call. (*Crime Stoppers*)

The Saipan Community School announced yesterday the hiring of Anne McCaslin, who will be the new concert band leader and elementary music teacher. Music is a very important part of the full education our students at SCS receive due to the proven academic, social, and personal benefits that music education provides.

McCaslin was born in San Jose, California, and raised in Spokane, Washington. She has an extensive background in both instrumental and choral music, having had ensembles showcased at such venues as

Downtown Disney in Disney World, and various venues in Seoul, Sokcho, and Gyeongju, South Korea. She attended college at Washington State University, with a bachelor's degree in Music Education and a separate bachelor's degree in Psychology.

While teaching at SCS, McCaslin will be responsible for directing the SCS concert



band for the beginning, intermediate, and advanced band classes. In addition she will be teaching elementary music for Kindergarten through 5th grade, teaching ukulele to grades 3rd to 5th.

"I am so excited to be working at Saipan Community School. I look forward to continuing and expanding upon the tradition of excellence

SCS is known for, as well as learning from my students as I teach them," McCaslin said.

Thus far on Saipan, McCaslin has enjoyed pounding mochi at the Mochitsuki Festival, paddle boarding, hiking through the jungle, and playing Ultimate Frisbee. McCaslin also enjoys the island's beaches and beautiful, welcoming people.

In future endeavors McCaslin hopes to continue teaching music, while continuing her studies in psychology. (PR)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Two-day meeting with all FSM citizens

All FSM citizens and their families are kindly asked to attend two important meetings with FSM officials on Friday, Jan. 13, and Saturday, Jan. 14, at the Garapan Central Park Round House. The purpose of these meetings is to educate/discuss with FSM voters about the dual citizenship amendment to the FSM Constitution. Both meetings will start at 6pm. (PR)

After-school program at Kagman center

The Family & Youth Enhancement Program-Youth Services Section of the Division of Youth Services offers an after-school program at the Kagman Community Center on Tuesdays,

Wednesdays and Thursdays from 2:30pm to 5:30pm. Aside from homework/school project sessions, the program also provides for youth prevention activities that focus on literacy, art and music, career opportunities and cultural demonstrations. (PR)

Kagman schools PTSA meeting set

This is to inform all parents, guardians, and the community that the Kagman cluster schools will be having a PTSA meeting on Thursday Jan. 19, 2017, at 5pm at the Kagman Elementary School cafeteria. We are encouraging all parents, and guardians to attend this meeting. Please call the school at 237-3921 or 664-4100 for more information. (PR)

A 2012 graduate of Kagman High School just graduated from the University of San Francisco in December 2016 with a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a minor in Asian Studies.

Allyssa Shara-Mae Arangorin intends to pursue a master's degree in nursing at the San Francisco State University, with the ultimate goal to become a pediatric nurse and later a pediatrician.

Leaving the islands and attending school in the U.S. mainland was an important yet difficult decision for Arangorin. "Going to a new place meant that I had to give up everything that I was used to—family, friends, the island. But I also knew that sacrificing familiarity meant education and awareness, which I hope to share [with the] community."

Arangorin chose the University of San Francisco because she says it has a great faculty, academics, and diverse stu-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Allyssa Shara-Mae Arangorin poses with her family after graduating from the University of San Francisco in December 2016.

dent body. She joined several clubs and volunteered in her school's university ministry's St. Vincent de Paul Meal Project, which helps feed San Francisco's homeless.

Arangorin interned at the San Francisco General Hospital as well as California Pacific Medical Center's Mother Baby Unit.

"Moving to a diverse city like San Francisco and attending a private school exposed me to different people with different stories. Combining psychology, which made me understand how people and the world works, with my passion in helping the youth, I aim to become a medical professional that would someday lead a generation," she said. "Like my university motto states, 'Change the world from here!'"

Arangorin is the daughter of Manolo and Norbe Arangorin. (PR)

Kagman High alumna graduates from USF

Opinion

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EDITORIAL

Replacing Obamacare with job-killing Chaoscare

Like most of the charges that Republicans threw at the Affordable Care Act over the past six years, the accusation that it was a “job-killer” didn’t hold water. In fact, it was just the opposite. But if killing jobs is what opponents want, they can make it happen by eliminating key provisions of the health care law, which studies say could force an estimated 3 million people out of work.

Using a meat-ax instead of a scalpel, Senate Republicans last week began trying to dismember the law without offering a replacement or anticipating how their efforts would affect millions of citizens insured through the plan.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York said of the GOP efforts, “They’re like the dog who caught the bus. They don’t know what to do with it ... We’re (Democrats) going to tell America that they’re replacing affordable care with chaos.”

A Gallup poll in September showed 51 percent of Americans disapproved of ACA, and 44 percent approved. A poll by the Commonwealth Fund, a foundation focused on health care research, showed 77 percent of adults in marketplace plans like them, and 88 percent of those with Medicaid coverage under the ACA expansion are relatively satisfied with their coverage.

More jobs, a modicum of public satisfaction and saving lives hasn’t stopped Republicans in Congress from labeling ACA a failure and trying 60 times to repeal all or parts of it since it became law in 2010.

Attitudes toward the law have followed party lines, not factual analysis. Opponents say it’s too expensive, too intrusive, difficult to navigate and doesn’t provide enough choices. Supporters like that people can’t be denied coverage for pre-existing medical conditions, that companies have to treat men and women equally regarding cost and that children can stay on their parent’s health care plan until age 26.

As much as Republicans like “job creators,” and as much as President-elect Donald Trump boasts about preserving American jobs, you’d think they’d recognize the ACA’s success in creating jobs and easing pressure on unemployment.

A study by the Commonwealth Fund and the Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University says that if the tax credits and Medicaid expansion parts of the law are repealed in January 2019, about 2.6 million jobs would be lost, with the number increasing to nearly 3 million positions in health care and other sectors by 2021.

The right thing to do is keep the law in place, at least until an adequate replacement is devised. Americans dependent on the insurance, and the health care industry, which warns that repeal could be disastrous without a substitute, should not be quaking because of the Republican vendetta on Obamacare.

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The Trump World Order: Get ready for a wild ride

By MARKOS KOUNALAKIS
THE SACRAMENTO BEE

Guessing what the world will look like in the Trump era is a risky game. A President Donald Trump has no governing track record, and his campaign was full of contradicting policies and statements that make only one thing certain: Unpredictability.

Surprise is an element that Trump relishes both in deal-making and, already as PEOTUS, in policy. America and the world need to get ready for a wild ride.

During the first 100 days, it is safe to expect a series of surprise moves. On the one hand, his opponents will question his presidency's legitimacy, conflicts of interest and seeming disregard for governing institutions. On the other hand, startling shifts will also come from a White House manically pitching and tweeting new domestic and foreign policy directions.

Leaving aside domestic considerations, the world must anticipate and understand the potentially dramatic geopolitical shifts coming in the new Trump World Order. Trying to divine Trump's new foreign policy priorities might be a fool's errand, but there are enough data points to guess at his global game of building and strengthening alternate alliances.

Russia, of course, tops the list. But improved relations with the autocratic Vladimir Putin might be just a piece of a much larger real-world RISK! game. Trump will try to put President Barack Obama's foreign policy—one that tried to balance America's interests and values—into Chapter 11 and start anew.

Defending and promoting liberal democratic values and human rights has been an important part of modern U.S. foreign policy. Obama continued the bipartisan act of using development, diplomacy and defense to advance these values globally, albeit with uneven success. It was always assumed that if America did good, America would do well.

Early indications are that values promotion will drop to the bottom of the foreign policy agenda and take a backseat to America's commercial and strategic material interests, and that those interests are actively being redefined (and retweeted) as the nation races toward Inauguration Day. Values will play some role, of course, but only insofar as they cost nothing or can be leveraged as negotiating deal points.

If a nation wants better trade conditions or visa rules with the U.S., well, then concerns about that nation's human rights abuses or authoritarian regime could be overlooked or dealt away for a

better commercial deal or investment advantage. Expect this to be part of the new diplomacy and future alliance structure.

Big picture, however, is where everything is about to flip.

America's superpower status is about to be overhauled into a strategic role as the world's leading petropower. Leveraging American preponderance in defense and her energy production primacy will make the still economically diverse U.S. a supremely fortified petrostate. Energy will be leveraged to define how Trump and his team select global alliances and regional adversaries. Global energy security could be the simple and singular operating principle that allows him to partner with Russia and contain China.

Such a bold and risky approach is fraught with danger and could easily backfire, but the elements for pursuing such an “energy first” policy are already falling into place. The Trump-Putin bromance will allow America to become Russia's BFF, especially if Moscow is slowly willing to turn its back on Beijing, where there is no love lost. China is highly dependent on Russian and Middle Eastern imported energy supplies.

Combine the energy pressure with more independence-minded Taiwan, a slowly reinvigorating and muscular Japan, a potentially re-stabilized South Korea, and an America-reoriented Philippines and the stage will be set for a full Chinese containment policy that aggressively reinforces an understanding that Beijing's fake islands and forward military posture will be addressed forcefully. Yes, a dangerous game of chicken is shaping up during this lame duck period. And Russia is key to the strategy.

The recent expulsions of Russian diplomats and spies, serious election (and ongoing) hacking and the GOP's traditional antipathy toward Moscow—and especially Putin—only gives Trump and his Secretary of State nominee, energy executive Rex Tillerson, more leverage for a better deal. Ultimately, a Trump administration may cede recognition of Crimea, halt economic sanctions, and arrive at a modern-day Yalta II agreement over sovereignties and spheres of influence.

But such a deal could also create a “Finlandized” Ukraine, a weakened NATO presence and role in former Soviet captive nations, and potentially an eerily reminiscent non-aggression pact in Europe that permits the circumstances for the European Union to continue to collapse. Europe's leaders might feel intimidated and abandoned by such a bold Russian-American alliance, but assured enough to deal directly with Putin's Russia in the short run. On the plus side, Europeans might figure out a way to axe autocrats and populists and, instead, bring back liberal demo-

See TRUMP on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Protecting yourself from identity theft

THE CONSUMER CAUTION CORNER

By MICHAEL J. CYGANEK
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

This week, the Office of the Attorney General's Consumer Caution Corner focuses on identity theft.

What is identity theft?

Identity theft is a serious crime. Identity theft happens when someone uses information about you without your permission.

They could use your:

- name and address
- credit card or bank account numbers
- Social Security number
- medical insurance account numbers

Why should I care if someone steals my identity?

You will be responsible for what the thief does while using your personal information. You might have to pay for what the thief buys. This is true even if you do not know about the bills.

How can that happen?

- A thief might get a credit card using your name.
- He changes the address.
- The bills go to him, but he never pays them.
- That means the credit card company thinks you are not paying the bills.
- That will hurt your credit.

This is the kind of trouble identity theft can cause for you.

How can I protect my identity?

Protect your personal information. That helps you protect your

identity. Here are some things you can do:

At home:

- keep your financial records, Social Security and Medicare cards in a safe place
- shred papers that have your personal or medical information
- take mail out of your mailbox as soon as you can

As you do business:

- only give your Social Security number if you must. Ask if you can use another kind of identification
- do not give your personal information to someone who calls you or emails you
- On the computer:
- use passwords that are not easy to guess. Use numbers and symbols when you can
- do not respond to emails or other messages that ask for personal information
- do not put personal information on a computer in a public place, like the library

How will I know if someone steals my identity?

Read your bills and account statements.

Watch for:

- things you did not buy
- withdrawals you did not make
- a change of your address that you did not expect
- bills that stop coming

Look at medical statements. You might see charges you do not recognize. That might mean someone stole your identity.

Get your credit report. You get one free credit report every year from each credit reporting company.

To order:

- Call Annual Credit Report at 1-877-322-8228.
- Answer questions from a recorded system. You have to give

your address, Social Security number, and birth date.

■ Choose to only show the last four numbers of your Social Security number. It is safer than showing the full number on your report.

■ Choose which credit reporting company you want a report from. (You get one report free from each company every year.)

The company mails your report to you. It should arrive two to three weeks after you call.

Read your credit report carefully. Look for mistakes or accounts you do not recognize. This could mean someone stole your identity.

Each week, the OAG's Consumer Protection Education Program aims to provide consumers and businesses with the "know-how" to identify and protect themselves from unfair trade practices and marketplace schemes. If you would like to file a consumer complaint, please pick up a form at the Office of the Attorney General on Capitol Hill and then please submit it by email to consumer_counsel@cnmioag.org Please note: We cannot act as your private attorney. If you need legal assistance, we will recommend that you contact a private attorney or legal aid organization. We cannot give legal advice or act as your private attorney.

Michael J. Cyganek is the consumer counsel of the Office of the Attorney General.

TRUMP

From Page 10

cratic leaders.

Russian detente and partnership is all a little bit weird to think about in 2017, but so was Richard Nixon's opening to China a few decades ago—done back then in part to help pressure and contain the Soviet Union. Risky.

Those critical of accommodating Putin (I am one of them) will be reminded of America's longstanding relationship with Saudi Arabia's royal family. Surely—the argument will be—an America that can maintain good strategic and defense relations with the Wahabi-dominated Islamic holy land that bred the 9/11 attackers can easily work with the patriotic Christian country that fought as America's ally to defeat Nazism in World War II. These debate points are already being developed and propagated by the Heritage Foundation, Breitbart news and former Congressman Tom Tancredo.

This world view, held by Trump's closest advisors, sees the evil of "radical Islamic terrorism" as the overarching enemy and an existential threat to the Western world. Trump's advisers see the Islamic State's occupation of Syrian and Iraqi cities as urban concentration camps, performing a slow Christian genocide while enslaving and starving entire captive urban populations. Given these conditions and beliefs, a new and deep alliance with a Russia that uses extremely violent and indiscriminate means to destroy this evil—even if it means destroying the village to save it—could be the moral and security justification soon used for this policy.

More importantly for Trump, it is something he can sell to an American public inured to its longest war in history and emotionally divorced from military action. As a result, Americans have been increasingly conditioned to fear Muslims and abide extreme measures overseas—especially by others. A Russia unaccountable to its own population would willingly be America's bad cop in the Middle East and the world.

Jan. 20 will bring about not only a change in presidential style. Inauguration Day will probably usher in a new era where the Trump administration defines America's leading role in the world not by its deep adherence to and global promotion of democratic civil society and the rule of law, but by an energetically raw realist faith and practice in power over principle.

Or not. It's anybody's guess.

Markos Kounalakis is a senior fellow at Central European University and visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution. He can be reached at markos@stanford.edu. Follow him on Twitter @KounalakisM. He wrote this for the Sacramento Bee.

Calling out Trump's 'lies' carries risks for news media

By PETER ST. ONGE
THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

Does Donald Trump lie?

Of course he does. He says things that aren't true, knowing that they're not true. Even his supporters—at least some of them—acknowledge this.

Can all of Trump's falsehoods be called lies? Well, that's a little trickier. Some might be things he actually believes. Some might be more about stubbornness than deceit.

Sometimes, with Trump, it's hard to say for sure what's going on.

That's essentially the point Wall Street Journal editor Gerard Baker made earlier this month in an appearance on "Meet the Press." Baker was asked by host Chuck Todd why his newspaper is reluctant to call Trump's falsehoods "lies."

"I'd be careful about using the word 'lie,'" Baker responded. "'Lie' implies much more than just saying something that's false. It implies a deliberate intent to mislead."

This did not go over well—not just with anti-Trump fire breathers, but with a surprising group: journalists. Former CBS news icon Dan Rather called Baker's remarks "deeply disturbing." Miami Herald columnist Leonard Pitts, citing "these perilous times," urged journalists to "speak the truth when the truth was plain."

Others had a more sinister theory: that Baker was merely the puppet of his conservative employer, Rupert Murdoch's News Corp.

That newspapers-bowing-to-corporate-bosses thing isn't new, by the way. It's what conservatives have alleged—and liberals have scoffed at—for the eight years of Barack Obama's presidency.

But the Baker dustup is about more than a newspaper's reticence to call out Donald Trump's lies. It's about people so horrified at Trump's victory, and so fearful of his presidency, that some lash out at anything that falls short of affirming those horrors and fears.

Another example: Last week, when House Republicans initially voted to strip the powers of the Office of Congressional Ethics, they were met with a backlash that included a cautionary tweet from the president-elect. When Republicans backed down, at least some media reported that Trump's tweet might have had something to do with it.

That, said critics, was media "malpractice," and they pointed to House members who said that constituent complaints, not Trump, had caused them to reverse course. But that's exactly what a representative might say if he or she wanted to appear responsive to voters (and not a stooge of the incoming president). And the media were right to note that Trump's tweet might have played a role, too.

None of which means that media won't rise up against wrongs in a Trump presidency. For starters, columnists and editorial writers have already been unafraid to offer their opinion on Trump and the truth. We've been doing that kind of thing for more than a century.

As for reporters and editors? They have and should point out falsehoods from Trump. If anything, journalists can do it more aggressively instead of falling back on their historical tendency to give inaccurate statements and observable truths something close to equal treatment, in an effort to be "fair."

But here's another truth: People trust media less than ever. Fewer people think we're fair, and sometimes we give them good reason. If reporters decide to take moral stands that include calling falsehoods "lies," we risk a greater deterioration of that trust.

We also risk weakening the role we still believe we can claim—as people who pursue facts, with hopes that they'll reveal truth. Elusive as that may be.

Peter St. Onge is a columnist for the Charlotte Observer. Readers may email him at pstonge@charlotte.

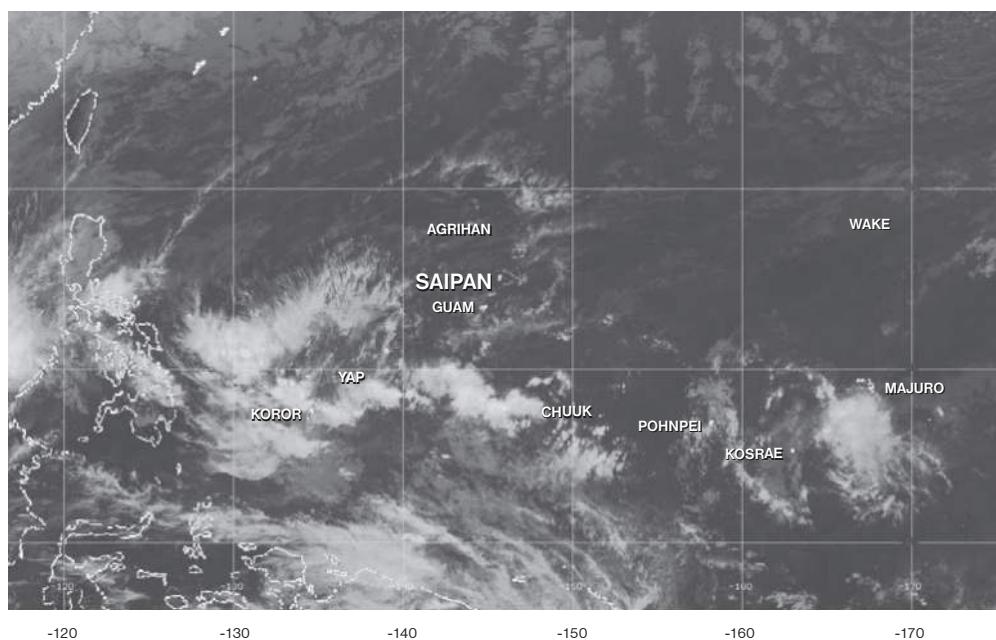
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated light showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated light showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.

▲ 87°	▼ 79°	▲ 87°	▼ 79°	▲ 88°	▼ 79°	▲ 89°	▼ 79°
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YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:00 AM, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2017

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A very weak disturbance to the south of Koror continues to drift west and weaken. This disturbance is responsible for mostly cloudy skies over the Marianas. As the trough continues to move westward, weak ridging will build in to the region. This will result in drier conditions returning to the Marianas for the weekend. Mostly cloudy skies are expected to continue through Friday night, with isolated light showers possible as well. By Saturday, the islands will again see a much drier regime, with partly cloudy skies and a slight chance of light showers returning to the forecast. A strong low pressure system to the north could bring stronger winds back to the Marianas by the middle of next week.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲	▼	°F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorm	85° / 77°	
Palau	Thunderstorm	84° / 78°	
Yap	Thunderstorm	84° / 78°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorm	84° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorm	84° / 79°	
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°	
Majuro	Thunderstorm	85° / 79°	

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲	▼	°F
Auckland	Showers	72° / 59°	
Beijing	Sunny	37° / 18°	
Hong Kong	Cloudy	66° / 61°	
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	85° / 66°	
London	Showers	41° / 30°	
Los Angeles	Rain	59° / 45°	
Manila	Showers	88° / 73°	
Melbourne	Rain	81° / 59°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	78° / 70°	
New York	Cloudy	60° / 47°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	46° / 37°	
Paris	Rain	46° / 34°	
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	45° / 25°	
Rome	Showers	50° / 48°	
Salem	Mostly Sunny	68° / 48°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	39° / 23°	
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	32° / 14°	
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	50° / 32°	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	64° / 51°	



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- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
1:21 AM	LOW TIDE	-0.63
8:19 AM	HIGH TIDE	2.01
1:44 PM	LOW TIDE	1.11
6:45 PM	HIGH TIDE	2.1

	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:46 AM	6:04 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:05 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:06 PM
Sunday	6:47 AM	6:06 PM
Monday	6:47 AM	6:07 PM

	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	6:07 AM	5:54 PM
Friday	-	7:04 AM	6:55 PM
Saturday	-	7:58 AM	7:53 PM
Sunday	-	8:48 AM	8:49 PM
Monday	-	9:33 AM	9:42 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2017

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily	UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily	UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota	UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6	UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily	UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily	UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)				GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7	UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)				ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN			
UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7	UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL297	4:15pm	7:05pm	Daily	DL298	10:25am	2:55pm	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1	LJ651	8:25am	1:45pm	Daily
TW308	2:35am	6:25am	1, 2, 7	ZE581	9:50am	3:20pm	Daily
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
TW308	3:05am	6:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6	OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ628	3:50am	7:40am	Daily	TW307	8:15pm	1:35am+1	1, 6, 7
7C3403	4:35am	8:30am	Daily	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
LJ652	3:10pm	7:05pm	Daily	TW307	8:45pm	2:05am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	OZ627	9:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily
ZE582	4:30pm	9:05pm	Daily	7C3404	10:10pm	3:30am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	2:55am	6:10am	1, 7	7C3452	8:30pm	1:20am+1	6, 7
OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7	OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6
7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	4, 5	7C3452	9:35pm	2:15am+1	3, 4
SAIPAN-JEJU (CJU)				JEJU (

Business

Donald Trump is pushing Republican leaders for fast action on Obamacare

WASHINGTON (AP)—President-elect Donald Trump pushed Congress on Tuesday to act swiftly to repeal President Barack Obama's health care law and follow up with a replacement. Speaker Paul Ryan, after talking with Trump, announced that the House would aim to take both steps "concurrently."

The push for speed and coordination came as growing numbers of Republicans expressed concerns about GOP leadership's plans to repeal the Affordable Care Act without a replacement in hand, potentially leaving the 20 million people who gained coverage under the law in limbo.

"We have to get to business. Obamacare has been a catastrophic event," Trump said in an interview with The New York Times.

"Long to me would be weeks," he added of the gap between repealing and replacing the law. "It won't be repeal and then two years later go in with another plan."

Yet that's exactly the scenario that had been envisioned by GOP leaders who've described a transition period of months or years between repealing the enormously complex law and replacing it with something else.

Under the congressional timetable, procedural budget votes set for later this week in the House and Senate would put the repeal process in motion. But the vote on repealing "Obamacare" wasn't expected until mid-February at earliest; a full replacement hadn't been expected until months or even years later.

Trump seemed confused about that schedule, telling the Times that the repeal should be "probably sometime next week," and "the replace will be very quickly or simultaneously, very shortly thereafter."

Despite his imprecision, Trump was clear that he put an imperative on speed for both repealing and replacing the law, a message certain to be received loud and clear by congressional Republicans, some of whom had been urging the president-elect to make his views on the matter better known.

And even before Trump's comments Tuesday, the notion of a lengthy transition period was running into problems on Capitol Hill from Republicans anxious about waiting too long between repealing the health law and replacing it. House Republicans in particular, who face voters every two years, are eager to dispense with the

matter before the 2018 midterm elections.

Facing growing demands for speed, Ryan addressed reporters Tuesday morning and described a new approach.

"It is our goal to bring it all together concurrently," Ryan said. "We're going to use every tool at our disposal, through legislation, through regulation, to bring replace concurrent along with repeal, so that we can save people from this mess."

That may be easier said than done. Under arcane budget rules in the Senate, Republicans will likely be able to use their slim majority to push through repeal legislation without Democratic votes. But they would need Democrats' help to write a replacement bill. Ryan indicated Tuesday Republicans would try to get around that obstacle by passing some elements of the replacement bill using fast-track Senate rules, too.

Yet although they agree on certain approaches like expanding the use of health savings accounts, Republicans are far from agreeing on a unified GOP solution that could take the place of the far-reaching Affordable Care Act, frustrating some in the party.

Honda adds 772,000 vehicles to ongoing air bag recall

TOKYO (AP)—Honda Motor Co. is recalling 772,000 additional Honda and Acura vehicles in the U.S. for defective front passenger seat air bag inflators made by Japanese supplier Takata Corp.

The vehicles, announced in a recall late Tuesday by Honda in the U.S., are part of an expanded recall of 1.29 million vehicles, including some recalled earlier. No recalls related to the U.S. one are being announced in other regions yet, Tokyo-based Honda said Wednesday.

Takata is at the center of a

massive recall of inflators that can explode in a crash, injuring people by sending metal shrapnel into the passenger compartments.

Among the models recalled are the 2005-2006 Acura MDX, 2005-2012 Acura RL, 2008-2012 Honda Accord, 2006-2011 Honda Civic, 2007-2012 Honda Fit and 2010-2012 Honda Insight.

The recall also covers the 2009-2012 Acura TSX, 2011-2012 Acura TSX Wagon, 2010-2012 Acura ZDX, 2010-2012 Honda Crosstour, 2005-2011 Honda CR-V, 2005-2011 Honda

Element, 2012 Honda FCX Clarity, 2005-2012 Honda Pilot and 2006-2012 Honda Ridgeline.

Takata uses the chemical ammonium nitrate to cause a small explosion designed to inflate the air bags in a crash. As many as 16 people have been killed worldwide and about 180 have been injured.

More than 100 million vehicles involving 17 automakers have been recalled worldwide, including 69 million in the U.S. alone, underscoring the scale of the crisis. Because of the scope of the recalls, the replacements are going to take years.

VW is in running for global sales crown

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)—It's ironic: Volkswagen spent 2016 battling a huge scandal over cars it rigged to cheat on emissions tests.

And now stands a decent chance to pass Toyota for the title of world's biggest carmaker for the year.

Booming business in China helped Volkswagen increase its sales to 10.31 million vehicles last year across all its brands, which include Audi,

Porsche and Skoda, the company said Tuesday.

That was an increase of 3.8 percent over 2015, when Volkswagen came in second to Toyota. And a strong finish to the year in December - 11.8 percent better than the same month the year before - improves the company's chances of moving from No. 2 to No. 1 in global sales.

That Volkswagen is even in the running for top spot seems

remarkable considering how terrible the year was on the legal and image front.

The company based in Wolfsburg, Germany, said Tuesday it was in advanced talks on a draft settlement with the U.S. Justice Department and U.S. Customs and Border Protection under which it would pay \$4.3 billion in criminal and civil penalties in the emissions scandal.

Nation

Official: Russia has Trump dossier



AP

President-elect Donald Trump speaks with reporters after meeting French businessman Bernard Arnault at Trump Tower in New York, Monday, Jan. 9, 2017.

WASHINGTON (AP)

Top intelligence officials last week told President-elect Donald Trump about an unsubstantiated report that Russia had compromising personal and financial information about him, a U.S. official said Tuesday.

The official spoke on the condition of anonymity because the official was not allowed to publicly discuss the matter.

The briefing about the document was first reported by CNN. A summary of the allegations was separate from a classified assessment of Russia's attempts to meddle in the U.S. presidential election. Trump and President Barack Obama were briefed on the intelligence community's findings last week.

Shortly after news reports were published about the briefing, Trump tweeted: "FAKE NEWS—A TOTAL POLITICAL WITCH HUNT!"

Trump was expected to hold a previously scheduled news conference Wednesday to discuss his future plans regarding his role with the Trump Organization.

The unsubstantiated dossier on Trump was compiled

by a former Western intelligence operative as part of an opposition research project originally financed by a Republican client who opposed Trump, and later funded by Democrats, according to Mother Jones, which published an article about the report in October and said the operative had turned over the report to the FBI. The New York Times reported the operative had previously worked for British intelligence. The

Associated Press has not been able to substantiate the information in the dossier, which misspelled the name of Russia's largest bank.

It's unclear why the intelligence officials decided to brief the president and Trump on the uncorroborated information at this time, but lawmakers and others have repeatedly noted that Russia collects intelligence on both Democrats and Republicans.

"The Russians also hacked systems associated with the Republicans. They just chose not to release that material yet," Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia, the ranking Democrat on the Senate intelligence committee, said Tuesday. "There's nothing that prevents them from doing so at a time of their choosing in the future."

Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway said in an interview Tuesday on NBC's "Late Night with Seth Meyers" that "nobody has sourced it. They're all unnamed, unspoken sources in the story." She said it may have originated with a Russian investigator or groups that wanted Hillary Clinton to win the White House.

The report had been circulating in Washington for months. In October, former Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid wrote the FBI asking the bureau to publicly disclose what it knew about the Trump campaign's ties to Russia. Reid was aware of the dossier before he wrote the letter, according to a person knowledgeable about the subject who spoke on condition of anonymity because this person was not authorized to speak publicly about

the matter.

FBI Director James Comey refused earlier Tuesday to say whether the FBI was investigating any possible ties between Russia and Trump's presidential campaign, citing policy not to comment on what the FBI might or might not be doing.

Comey was pressed by Democrats on the committee about whether the FBI was conducting an investigation. There was no mention during the hearing about the summary of the dossier, which was attached to the classified hacking assessment.

"I would never comment on investigations—whether we have one or not—in an open forum like this so I can't answer one way or another," Comey told the panel during his first public appearance before Congress since the election. In late October, Comey angered Democrats when he announced 11 days before the election that the FBI was looking at more emails as part of its investigation of Hillary Clinton.

Oregon Democratic Sen. Ron Wyden said the American people had a right to know about whether there is an FBI investigation into the Trump campaign's ties with Russia.

An active FBI investigation of the next president for ties between his campaign and a nation accused of meddling in the presidential election could further stoke mistrust in the legitimacy of the democratic process. It could also put Trump's own FBI in the awkward position of examining the conduct of those closest to the commander-in-chief.



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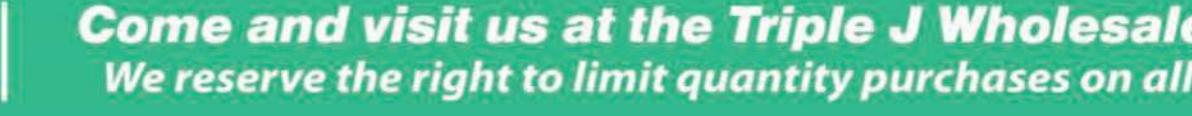
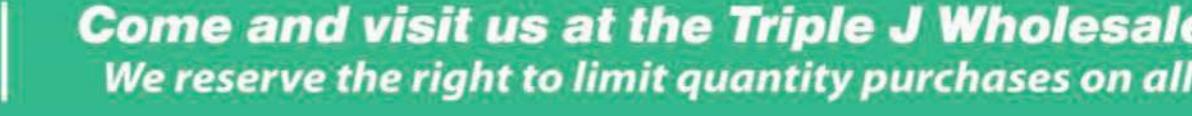
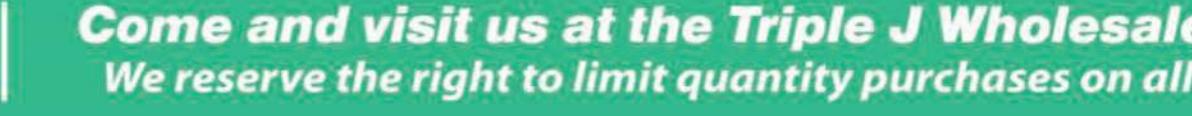
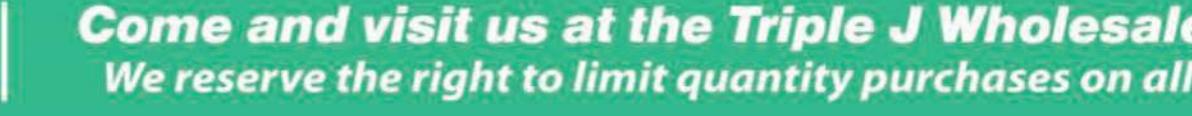
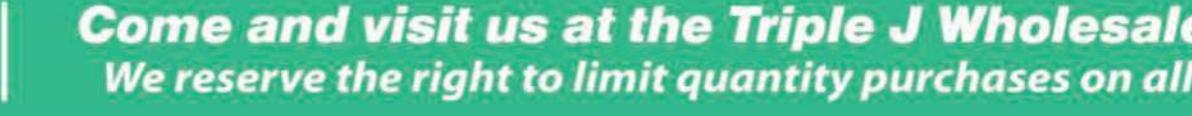
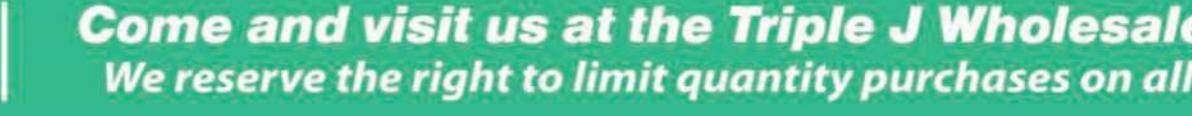
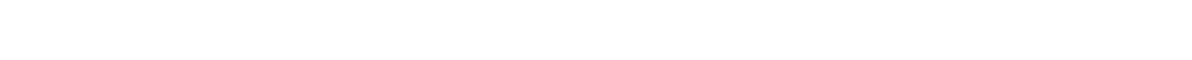
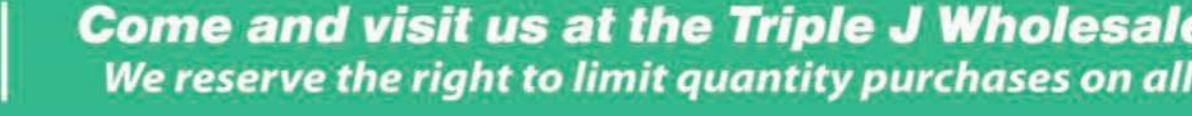
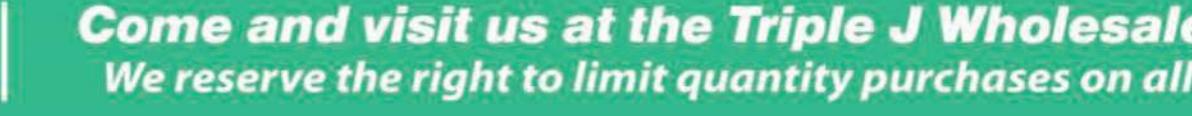
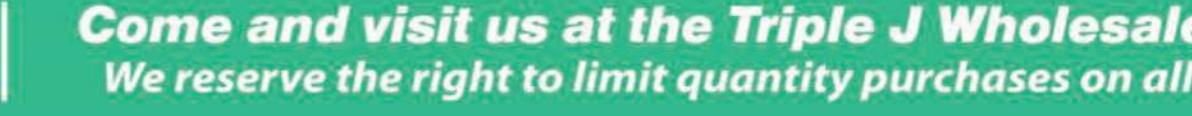
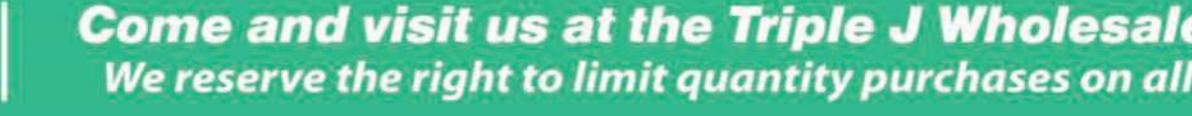
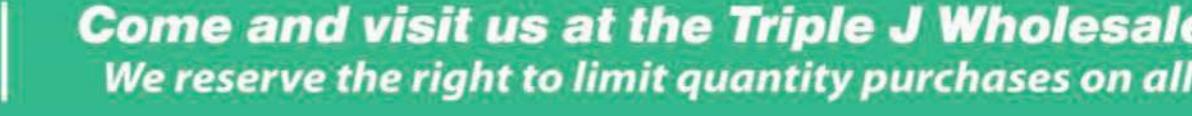
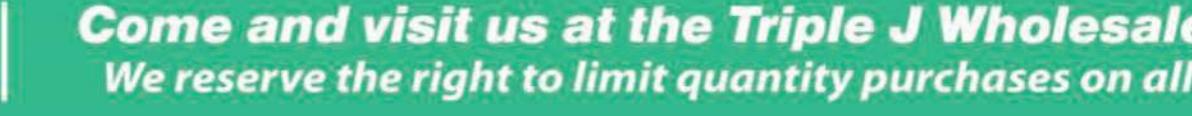
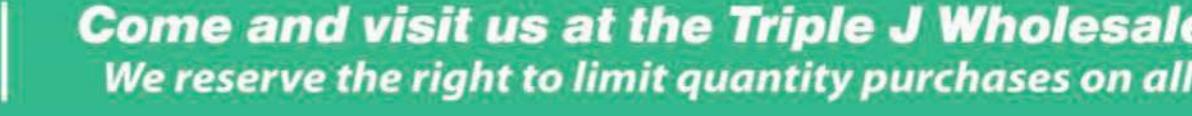
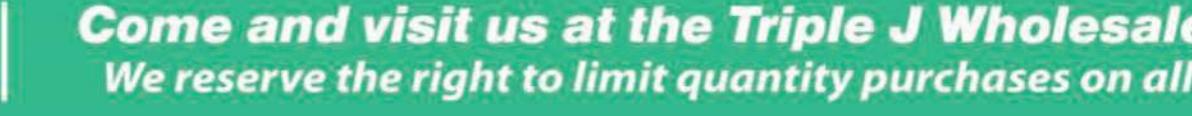
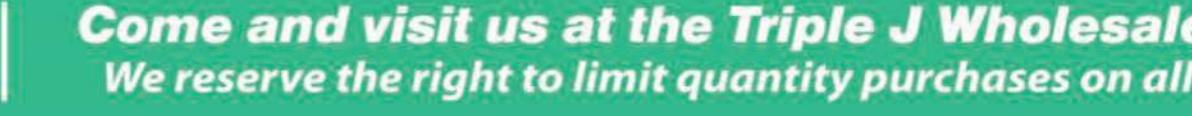
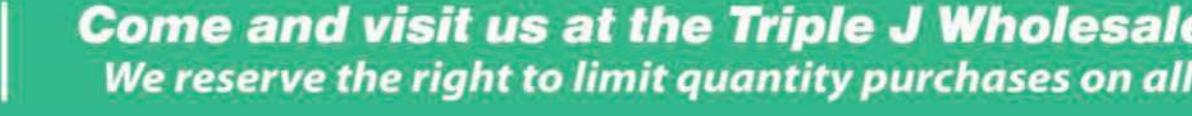
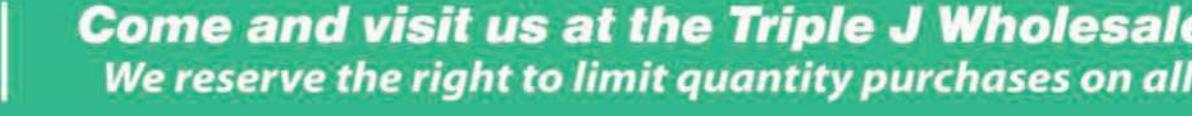
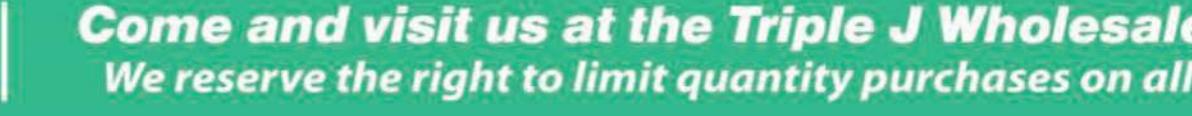
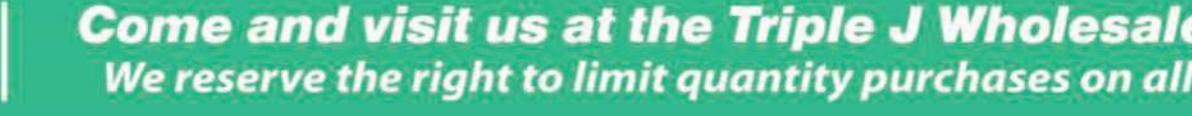
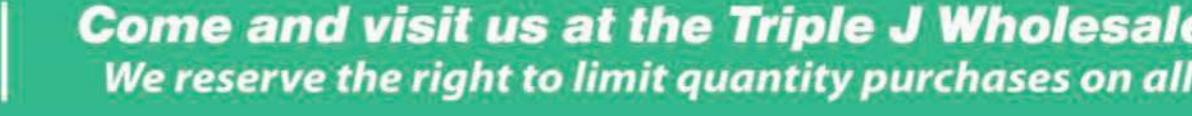
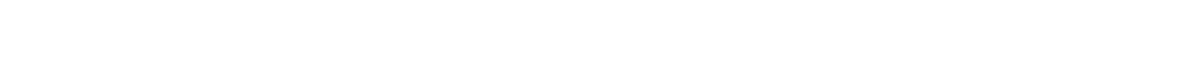
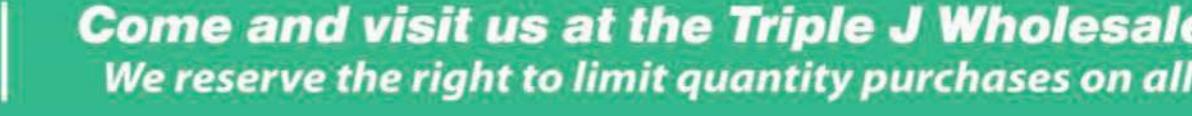
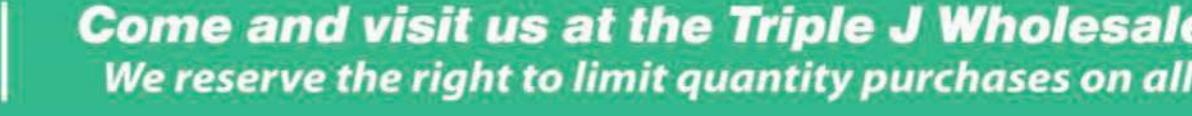
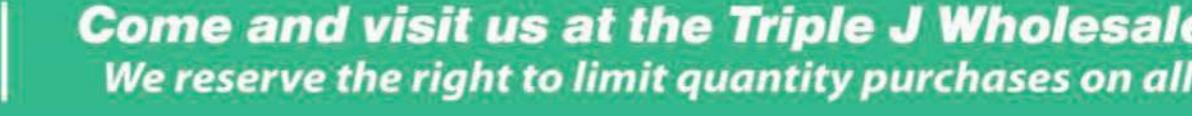
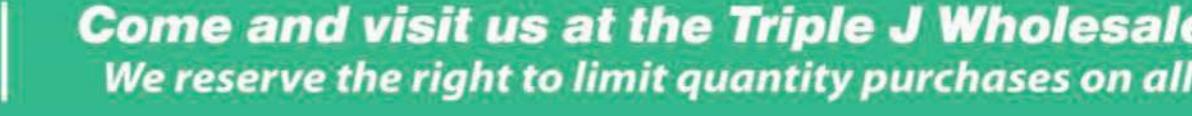
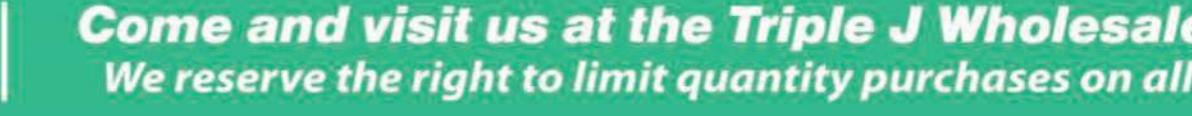
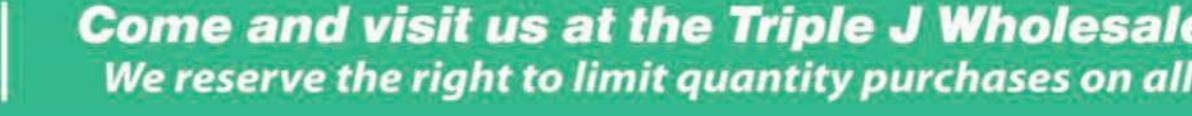
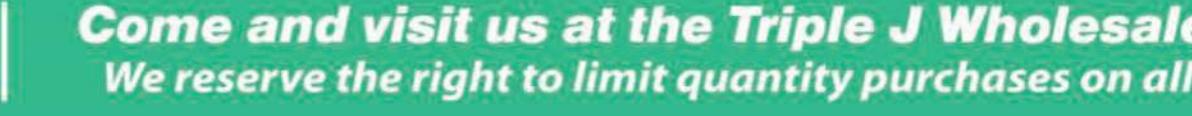
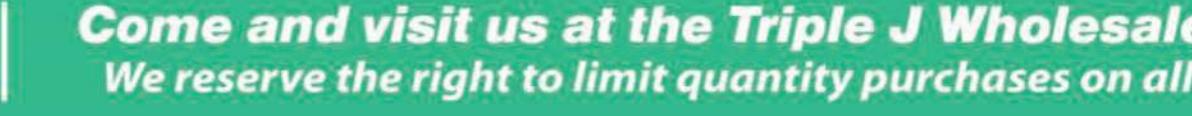
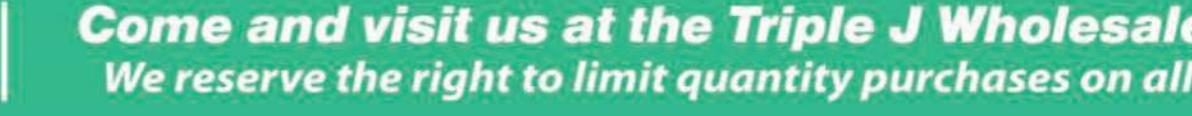
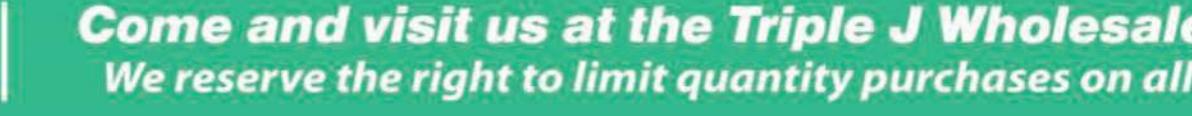
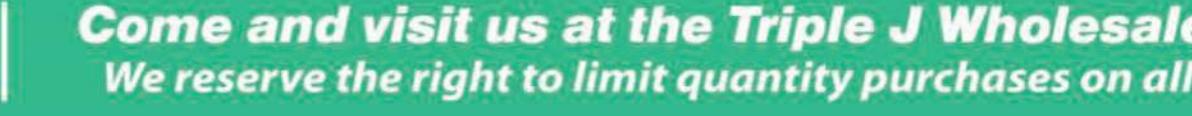
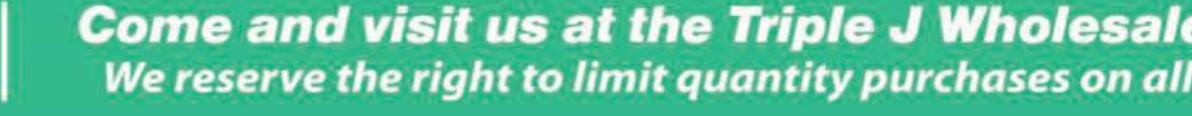
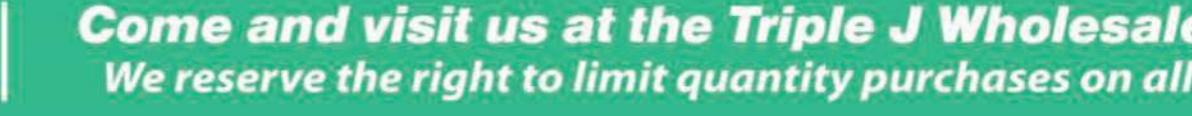
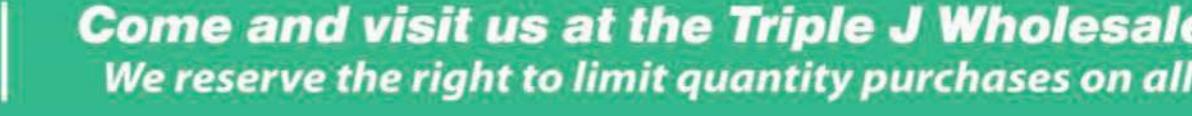
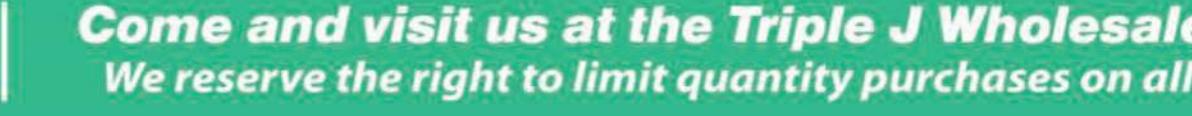
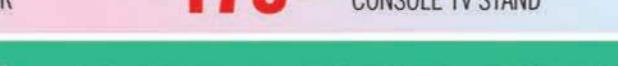
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Asia

Taipei claims that Chinese aircraft carrier is transiting Taiwan Strait

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Taiwan's defense ministry said China's sole aircraft carrier on Wednesday was transiting the Taiwan Strait amid heightened tensions between the mainland and self-governing island it claims as its own territory.

A ministry statement said the Liaoning was traveling northwest along the center line dividing the strait, along with its battle group.

It said the military was closely monitoring the vessels' passage and urged the public not to be alarmed. Taiwan regularly dispatches planes and ships to keep a watchful eye on Chinese forces' movements around the island, although the ministry statement gave no details about the military's response.

The heavily trafficked 160 kilometer- (100 mile-) wide Taiwan Strait separates Taiwan from southeastern China.

The carrier was on its way back from its first journey to the Western Pacific, where it carried out a training exercise.

Based on a Soviet-built platform and commissioned in 2012, the Liaoning earlier this month carried out what Beijing called routine combat drills in the South China Sea which Beijing claims almost in its entirety and has fortified with man-made islands. That followed China's November declaration that the carrier and its complement of J-15



In this Feb. 27, 2013 file photo released by China's Xinhua news agency, China's first aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, is anchored in the northern port in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province.

fighter jets was combat ready, setting off jitters in an already tense region.

The Liaoning set off for the Western Pacific last month, passing through the Miyako Strait, south of Okinawa, and then the Bashi Channel separating Taiwan from the Philippines as it entered the South China Sea.

Japanese and Taiwanese surveillance aircraft and ships closely monitored the Liaoning along its journey, seen by some as a sign of how China plans to use the carrier to demonstrate its willingness to back up its territorial claims with military muscle.

China and Taiwan split amid civil war in 1949 and Beijing has never renounced its threat to use force if it considers that necessary to prevent the

island's permanent independence from the mainland.

Relations between the sides have deteriorated badly since Taiwanese elected independence-leaning President Tsai Ing-wen last year, and Chinese officials have warned of more turbulence ahead unless she endorses Beijing's view that Taiwan is part of China.

China has been steadily ratcheting-up the economic and political pressure on Tsai, discouraging Chinese tourists from visiting the island of 23 million and intervening to prevent its participation in international forums. That has fueled speculation that Beijing will seek to win away more of the island's dwindling number of diplomatic allies, which now stand at just 21.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Powerful undersea quake hits south Philippines, no damage

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A powerful earthquake with a magnitude of 7.2 struck under the Celebes Sea off the southern Philippines on Tuesday but was far too deep to cause any damage and casualties or generate a tsunami. Renato Solidum of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said the quake, which was set off by movement of oceanic plates 625 kilometers (387 miles) under the seabed, was slightly felt in southern General Santos city. The undersea quake was centered 223 kilometers ((138 miles) southeast of Sulu province and aftershocks were possible, he said, adding such quakes at that depth are rare although shallower ones have struck the region a number of times in the past.

8 fishermen killed in suspected pirate attack in Philippines

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Eight Filipino fishermen were fatally shot by at least five suspected pirates who boarded their boat in the southern Philippines, officials said Tuesday. Seven other crewmembers survived the attack Monday night in waters near Zamboanga City by jumping off the boat and swimming away when the attackers began tying up their colleagues, said Commodore Joel Garcia, head of the Philip-

pine Coast Guard. "According to the initial investigation, (the attackers) were on board a boat and they were all armed," he said. "They immediately tied up eight of the crewmen, and the seven others were able to jump out and survive." Two of the survivors reached land and reported the massacre to a village leader, who alerted the coast guard. Two vessels were sent to the area, and coast guard personnel found the fishing boat floating with eight bodies on board. Pictures released by the coast guard showed the bodies sprawled on the boat's bow, with a nylon cord tying the men together by their hands.

Chinese delegation open to meeting Trump's team at Davos

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese President Xi Jinping's delegation to next week's World Economic Forum in the Swiss Alpine resort of Davos is open to meeting with President-elect Donald Trump's team, an official said Wednesday. Vice Foreign Minister Li Baodong told reporters at a briefing that "there are open channels of communication" with Trump's team. Bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the annual gathering of business leaders, politicians and cultural icons are still being finalized, but China would look into what sort of arrangements could be made "as long as the schedule permits and if there is the wish," he said.

World

Inmates' uncertainty on Gitmo anniv



In this Feb. 2, 2002, file photo, a detainee from Afghanistan is carried on a stretcher before being interrogated by military officials at Camp X-Ray at the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The prisoner is one of the detainees whom U.S. officials say have war wounds inflicted before they were captured in Afghanistan.

MIAMI (AP)—The looming presidency of Donald Trump has created a deep sense of uncertainty for inmates at Guantanamo on the 15th anniversary of the arrival of the first prisoners at the U.S. base in Cuba.

Nineteen of the remaining 55 prisoners are cleared for release and could be freed in the final days of Barack Obama's presidency, part of an effort to shrink the prison since the administration couldn't close it on his watch.

But those left behind will face the future under Trump, who has said he wants to keep Guantanamo open and recently called on Obama to halt releases.

"There is a great deal of anxiety and fear," said Pardiss Kebriaei, a lawyer with the Center for Constitutional Rights, a New York-based organization that represents five prisoners.

That backdrop has given a feeling of urgency to anti-Guantanamo demonstrations scheduled for Wednesday's anniversary in London, Los Angeles and Washington, featuring activists in the orange prison jumpsuits that came to symbolize the detention center though now they are typically worn only by a handful of detainees who have violated detention center rules and are on "disciplinary status."

In Washington, human rights groups, including Amnesty International USA, plan to rally at the Supreme Court and then march to the Senate as they demand Obama use his executive powers to override congressional restrictions on moving

detainees to the U.S. and close the detention center before Trump's Jan. 20 inauguration, an unlikely prospect given it would face legal challenges and could be reversed once Trump takes office.

"We want to see everyone in Guantanamo charged and fairly tried or released," said Elizabeth Beavers, senior campaigner with Amnesty. "That's what we see as the only lawful disposition."

The U.S. began using its military base on southeast Cuba's isolated, rocky coast to hold prisoners captured during the Afghanistan invasion, bringing the first plane-load on Jan. 11, 2002, and reaching a peak 18 months later of nearly 680. There were 242 prisoners left when Obama took office in 2009, pledging to close what became a source of international criticism over the mistreatment of detainees and the notion of holding people indefinitely, most without charge.

Obama was unable to close Guantanamo because of American opposition to holding any of the men in the United States. That ultimately became a ban on transferring them to U.S. soil for any reason, including trial, making the failure to close the detention center part of his legacy.

Trump said during the campaign that he not only wants to keep Guantanamo open but "load it up with some bad dudes." He weighed in on Twitter on Jan. 3, saying: "There should be no further releases from Gitmo. These are extremely dangerous people and should

not be allowed back onto the battlefield."

Two days later, the Pentagon announced four men held for more than 14 years without charge had been released and transferred to Saudi Arabia for resettlement. White House spokesman Josh Earnest rejected the president-elect's call for a halt to releases and said more would follow in the coming days.

"He'll have an opportunity to implement the policy that he believes is most effective when he takes office on Jan. 20," Earnest said.

The 55 remaining prisoners include 10 who are in some stage of the military commissions, a hybrid of civilian and military court set up to prosecute men at Guantanamo for war crimes. One, an aide to Osama bin Laden, was convicted and is serving a life sentence; two are awaiting sentences as part of plea deals; and the other seven are in the pre-trial stage, including five men charged in the Sept. 11, 2001, attack.

With the 19 cleared to go, that leaves 26 being held under international laws of war that the U.S. government says allows it to detain men indefinitely if they pose a threat to the country or its allies. For the most part, they can't be charged either because there isn't adequate evidence or the only evidence that exists is tainted because it was obtained by torture or because courts say their alleged offenses aren't international war crimes and could only be prosecuted by a civilian court in the United States, which is prohibited by Congress.

Focus

‘Yes we did’



President Barack Obama speaks during his farewell address at McCormick Place in Chicago, Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2017.

AP

By JOSH LEDERMAN and
DARLENE SUPERVILLE,
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO (AP)—President Barack Obama bid farewell to the nation Tuesday in an emotional speech that sought to comfort a country on edge over rapid economic changes, persistent security threats and the election of Donald Trump.

Forceful at times and tearful at others, Obama's valedictory speech in his hometown of Chicago was a public meditation on the many trials the U.S. faces as Obama takes his exit. For the challenges that are new, Obama offered his vision for how to surmount them, and for the persistent problems he was unable to overcome, he offered optimism that others, eventually, will.

"Yes, our progress has been uneven," Obama told a crowd of some 18,000. "The work of democracy has always been hard, contentious and sometimes bloody. For every two steps forward, it often feels we take one step back."

Yet Obama argued his faith in America had only been strengthened by what he's witnessed the past eight years, and he declared: "The future should be ours."

Brushing away tears with a handkerchief, Obama paid tribute to the sacrifices made by his wife—and by his daughters, who were young girls when they entered the big white home on Pennsylvania Avenue and leave as young women. He praised first lady Michelle Obama for taking on her role "with grace

and grit and style and good humor" and for making the White House "a place that belongs to everybody."

Soon Obama and his family will exit the national stage, to be replaced by Trump, a man Obama had stridently argued poses a dire threat to the nation's future. His near-apocalyptic warnings throughout the campaign have cast a continuing shadow over his post-election efforts to reassure Americans anxious about the future.

Indeed, much of what Obama accomplished during his two terms—from health care overhaul and environmental regulations to his nuclear deal with Iran—could potentially be upended by Trump. So even as Obama seeks to define what his presidency meant for America, his legacy remains in question.

Even as Obama said farewell—in a televised speech of just under an hour—the anxiety felt by many Americans about the future was palpable, and not only in the Chicago convention center where he stood in front of a giant presidential seal. The political world was reeling from new revelations about an unsubstantiated report that Russia had compromising personal and financial information about Trump.

Obama made only passing reference to the next president. When he noted he would soon be replaced by the Republican, his crowd began to boo.

"No, no, no, no, no," Obama said. One of the nation's great strengths, he said, "is the peaceful transfer of power from one president to the next."

Earlier, as the crowd of thousands chanted, "Four more years," he simply smiled and said,

"I can't do that."

Still, Obama offered what seemed like a point-by-point rebuttal of Trump's vision for America.

He pushed back on the isolationist sentiments inherent in Trump's trade policies. He decried discrimination against Muslim Americans and lamented politicians who question climate change. And he warned about the pernicious threat to U.S. democracy posed by purposely deceptive fake "news" and a growing tendency of Americans to listen only to information that confirms what they already believe.

Get out of your "bubbles," said the politician who rose to a prominence with a message of unity, challenging divisions of red states and blue states. Obama also revived a call to activism that marked his first presidential campaign, telling Americans to stay engaged in politics.

"If you're tired of arguing with strangers on the internet," Obama said pointedly, "try to talk with one in real life."

With Democrats still straining to make sense of their devastating election losses, Obama tried to offer a path forward. He called for empathy for the struggles of all Americans—from minorities, refugees and transgender people to middle-aged white men whose sense of economic security has been upended in recent years.

Paying tribute to his place as America's first black president, Obama acknowledged there were hopes after his 2008 election for a post-racial America.

"Such a vision, however well-intended, was never realistic," Obama said, though he insisted race relations are better now than a

few decades ago.

The former community organizer closed out his speech by reviving his campaign chant, "Yes we can." To that, he added for the first time, "Yes we did."

He staunchly defended the power of activists to make a difference—the driving factor behind Obama's optimism in the face of so much anxiety, he said. Though the coalition of young Americans and minorities who twice got Obama elected wasn't enough to elect Democrat Hillary Clinton to replace him, Obama suggested their day was still ahead.

"You'll soon outnumber any of us, and I believe as a result that the future is in good hands," he said.

Steeped in nostalgia, Obama's return to Chicago was less a triumphant homecoming than a bittersweet reunion bringing together loyalists and staffers, many of whom have long since left Obama's service, moved on to new careers and started families. They came from across the country—some on Air Force One, others on their own—to be present for the last major moment of Obama's presidency.

Unexpectedly absent was Obama's younger daughter, Sasha, who had been expected to join sister Malia at the speech. The White House said Sasha stayed in Washington due to a school exam Wednesday morning.

After returning to Washington, he will have less than two weeks before he accompanies Trump in the presidential limousine to the Capitol for the new president's swearing-in. After nearly a decade in the spotlight, Obama will become a private citizen, an elder statesman at 55. He plans to take some time off, write a book—and immerse himself in a Democratic redistricting campaign.

Environment

Weakened by drought, trees are falling in rainy California

FRESNO, Calif. (AP)—Drenching winter rains combined with the punishing effects of six years of drought are causing trees to topple across California, in some cases with deadly results. At least two people have been killed in the past month.

Seemingly sturdy oaks, palm trees in Southern California and giant sequoias farther north have been collapsing. Experts say that in some instances, the dry spell had weakened or killed the roots or trunks, and the soggy soil and wind caused the trees to tip over.

One woman who struck and killed by a tree while walking on a Northern California golf course Saturday. A woman posing for photographs as part of a wedding party was killed and five others were injured by a falling eucalyptus tree in Southern California last month.

A towering conifer in front of Joe Lauri's home in Fresno came crashing down during the weekend storm, giving in to shallow roots and the weight of rain-soaked pine needles. Lauri said he was relieved the damage wasn't worse.

"What can you do?" he said. "It could have landed on the house."

Another wet, blustery storm headed for California on Tuesday night threatened to knock



California State Parks Supervising Ranger Tony Tealdi walks to the fallen Pioneer Cabin Tree at Calaveras Big Trees State Park, Monday, Jan. 9, 2017, in Arnold, Calif. Famous for a "drive-thru" hole carved into its trunk, the giant sequoia was toppled over by a massive storm Sunday. AP

down many more trees in the Sierra Nevada and neighborhoods throughout the state.

"Pay attention to your surroundings and watch those trees," said Battalion Chief Scott McLean of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. "It is a hazard you need to be aware of."

Days of back-to-back

storms have brought the heaviest rain in a decade to parts of Northern California and Nevada, flooding homes, roads and vineyards. Some areas got more than a foot in the 72-hour period that ended early Monday, and then got rained on again on Tuesday.

In a state park near the town of Arnold, a beloved giant sequoia that became a drive-

thru tourist attraction decades ago when a tunnel was cut through its trunk crashed to the ground during the weekend storm. The ancient tree was sickly and barely alive before the storm.

Authorities had no immediate estimate of how many trees have toppled.

The epic drought gripping California has killed more

than 102 million trees in the Sierra Nevada, in many cases by weakening them so much that they became vulnerable to attack by bark beetles.

A huge effort is underway in the Sierra Nevada to cut down dead trees near roads and homes before they fall. There

are also fears that the deadwood could fuel catastrophic wildfires.

William Libby, a retired professor of forestry and genetics at the University of California, Berkeley, said that after a heavy rain, trees weakened by drought have been known to die suddenly instead of rebounding. He likened it to giving a starving person too much food too fast.

"When you're really weakened, trying to come back in a hurry, it is probably not a good idea," he said.

Lisa Smith, an arborist and president of the Western Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, downplayed the role of drought in knocking over trees.

She said that even healthy trees can give way if the ground is soft and their leaves catch the wind, pushing over the tree and leaving their leafless neighbors standing.

"Many trees that are drought-stressed and have limited foliage, ironically, may be sparse in their canopy and thus less prone to wind sail," she said.

By ANN M. SIMMONS
LOS ANGELES TIMES

As the congress of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources begins Thursday in Hawaii, environmental policymakers and conservation experts will discuss managing the environment, protecting wildlife and how best to chart the direction of conservation efforts.

High on the agenda is the pangolin.

A largely unknown creature, the pangolin holds the undesirable title of being the most-poached and illegally trafficked mammal in the world. Scientists estimate that more than 1 million have been killed in the last decade.

Q: What is a pangolin?

A: They are burrowing mammals covered in protective overlapping scales made of keratin, the same protein that forms human hair and fingernails, according to SavePangolins.org, an online group that raises global awareness of pangolins and the efforts to save them from extinction. They are solitary and nocturnal, and very little research has been con-

Fate of the pangolin, the world's most-poached mammal

ducted about their daily lives.

Found in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, there are eight species of pangolin, and they vary in weight and color, ranging from yellowish brown to dark brown. They feed on ants and termites excavated from the earth using their extraordinarily long and sticky tongues and elongated nails.

They often are referred to as being scaly anteaters, but they are not part of the anteater family, said Jeff Flocken, North American director for the International Union for Conservation of Nature. "They have no relatives on the planet."

Q: Why are pangolins prized, and how great is the threat to them?

Pangolins are commercially poached because their scales can be used in traditional medicine, as fashion accessories and eaten as a high-end cuisine.

"The threat is significant and escalating," said Flocken, who also is a member of the IUCN Pangolin Specialist Group.

It's impossible to know

how many pangolins exist, environmentalists have said, but "due to the high demand for consumption, they are disappearing," Flocken said.

Pangolins most likely have vanished in China and are fast disappearing from Vietnam, Thailand and other parts of Southeast Asia, wildlife experts said. In Africa, illegal trafficking is rapidly depleting their population.

The demand for pangolin in Asia has grown with the rise of the middle class and increasing affluence in countries such as China, experts said.

"Anything that is really rare and exotic is desirable. It's a symbol of wealth," said Crawford Allan, senior director of Traffic, a wildlife-trade monitoring network that works to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals poses no threat to nature conservation. "Anything seen to be delicacy is now in vogue."

Q: Who are the culprits?

The poachers range from independent trappers to crime syndicates, and their level

of destruction is staggering, wildlife experts said.

There have been 11,000 pangolins trafficked in the past three months, according to data collected by the IUCN. For example, in June, authorities in Hong Kong confiscated 4.4 tons of pangolin scales hidden in cargo labeled "sliced plastics" from Cameroon.

The haul was estimated to involve between 1,100 and 6,600 African pangolins, and was valued at around \$1.25 million on the black market, according to IUCN Director General Inger Andersen.

It was one of the largest seizures of pangolin scales, Andersen said in a statement in June.

In July, Hong Kong officials seized more than 10 tons of pangolin scales in shipping containers coming from Nigeria and Ghana. And in August, Indonesian authorities confiscated more than 650 pangolin bodies hidden in freezers at a home on the island of Java, according to media reports.

Lisa Hywood, founder of the Tikki Hywood Trust, a

trafficking does not abate, pangolins could pretty soon be on the brink of extinction," said Allan, the wildlife trafficking and trade expert.

Q: What's being done to protect pangolins?

A: Pangolins are listed under Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, which includes "species not necessarily threatened with extinction," but may become so without trade restrictions.

Many states in Africa and Asia have laws prohibiting the capture and trade of pangolins, but the laws are not always enforced.

On Wednesday, a coalition of conservation groups passed a motion calling for all eight pangolin species to receive the most stringent international protection available, a move that essentially would ban all international commercial trade and ramp up enforcement.

The motion also appeals for more support and understanding of the pangolin. A decision is expected later this month in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Life & Style

Trump news spreads faster than reporters can verify

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—The spread of a report about supposed damaging information about President-elect Donald Trump collected by Russia became a public test of journalistic standards Tuesday but burst into public consciousness even as those standards were being debated.

Hours after news reports circulated that Trump had been briefed by intelligence officials about the existence of the dossier on him, BuzzFeed News published a summary of

those allegations. It published despite its editor noting that there is reason to doubt the truth of them.

Most news organizations, including The Associated Press, held back on the specific allegations because they had not been substantiated. “Even Donald Trump deserves journalistic fairness,” tweeted David Corn, Washington bureau chief of Mother Jones.

Yet the news spread so quickly that by Tuesday night, one specific, salacious allegation

was a top trending topic on Twitter.

Ben Smith, editor of BuzzFeed, explained in a note to his staff that was published on Twitter that the news organization published the information so Americans could make up their own minds about allegations that have been circu-

lating at the highest levels of the United States government.

“Our presumption is to be transparent in our journalism and to share what we have with our readers,” Smith wrote. “We

have always erred on the side of publishing.”

He noted the doubt about



the allegations, and said BuzzFeed had tried and will continue trying to verify them.

“People of good will may disagree with our choice,” he wrote. “But publishing this dossier reflects how we see the job of reporters in 2017.”

It’s the latest, and a vitally important, example of how the internet has changed the flow of news and information, said veteran media ethi-

cist Bob Steele.

“It’s a very, very difficult time for editors of mainstream news organizations,” he said.

BuzzFeed is taking a big risk by publishing the information, he said. It’s important if such allegations are spread that organizations are clear about what has or hasn’t been substantiated, and whether an effort is being made to do so, he said.

‘La La Land,’ ‘Moonlight,’ ‘Deadpool’ are among the PGA’s top nominees

NEW YORK (AP)—Oscar favorites “La La Land,” “Moonlight” and “Manchester by the Sea” were nominated by the Producers Guild of America for its top award on Tuesday. But the snarky, expletive-spewing superhero of “Deadpool” continued his unlikely awards season campaign.

The guild’s 10 nominees for its best picture honor, the Darryl F. Zanuck Award, also included “Arrival,” “Fences,” “Hacksaw Ridge,” “Hell or High Water,” “Hidden Figures” and “Lion.” It was a largely expected bunch plus the surprising inclusion of “Deadpool.”

But the R-rated “X-Men” spinoff has now run up a slew of nominations, proving the industry has considerable admiration for the comic-book hit. It last week landed a nomination for best adapted screenplay the Writers Guild, and it

was twice nominated by the Golden Globes.

PGA nominees have historically been a good predictor for which films will receive Academy Award nominations for best picture. And for seven consecutive years up to last year, the PGA’s top prize matched (in one case with a tie) the academy’s top honor. Last year, however, the PGA chose “The Big Short,” while “Spotlight” won the Oscar. The Producers’ Guild uses the same preferential balloting system that the Academy of Motion Pictures employs.

The producers also nominated five films for best animated movie: “Finding Dory,” “Kubo and the Two Strings,” “Moana,” “The Secret Life of Pets” and “Zootopia.”

Winner will be announced in a Jan. 28 ceremony at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, California.

Hamilton’s letters to be auctioned

NEW YORK (AP)—The hottest Broadway show is shining its spotlight on a collection of historic American documents: Alexander Hamilton’s letters, being auctioned at Sotheby’s.

Javier Munoz, who plays him in the Broadway musical, got teary-eyed Tuesday as he held the only known letter from Hamilton’s son Philip to the man addressed as “Papa.” The son asks his father for advice on a written presentation, noting that his mentor had deleted a sentence Hamilton liked best.

“I’m overwhelmed,” said Munoz, who held the delicate old piece of paper unprotected, asking permission to flip it over. “It’s sort of like walking into someone’s apartment and looking at the desk where they work. And that’s so revealing about how their mind works.”

Dozens of the letters penned by one of the nation’s founding fathers will go on the block Jan. 18, with an estimated worth starting at \$1.4 million and topping \$2 million. But Sotheby’s expects the feverish interest in the megahit “Hamilton” likely will drive prices up.

The most valuable item of the auction, estimated at \$300,000 to \$500,000, is one of Hamilton’s “Pacificus” essays probing a contentious issue—George Washington’s declaration of his nation’s neutrality in the conflict between France and Great Britain.

“This is a unique conjunction of historical material with the popular zeitgeist,” said Selby Kiffer, the auction house’s expert on books and manuscripts. “I have not experienced anything like this before.”

DEATH AND FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENT

In Loving Memory of

†Antonio Villagomez Iginoef

Fondly called Tony Boy or Indian

September 17, 1956 – January 02, 2017

Was called to join our Creator on Monday, January 02, 2017 at the Commonwealth Healthcare Center

In his New Life he now joins his:

Parents: †Juan Rabauliman Iginoef and †Maria Villagomez Iginoef
Siblings: †Angel Taman, †Dionicia I. Lisua and †Guadalupe I. Fitial
Parents In-Law: †Valerio Mendiola Cabrera and †Mariana Aldan Cabrera
Siblings In-Law: †Vicente F. Mettao, †Crispin R. Lisua, †Consolacion C. Iginoef, †Joaquin and †Carmen Aldan Cabrera

His wonderful and loving memories will be forever cherished by:
Wife: Terry Cabrera Iginoef (Bolo)
Children: Jesse James Sr. C. & Shawna Crisostomo Iginoef, Vanessa Junn I. & Thomas Anthony Takai Pangelinan, Sr., Valerio John Cabrera Iginoef

Grand Children: Jesse James C. Iginoef, Jr., Shawn Jasen C. Iginoef, Anthony Bill C. Iginoef, Jasell Jasmeen C. Iginoef, Thomas Anthony I. Pangelinan, Jr.

Special and Loving Step Mother: Felicidad Odoshi Iginoef

Siblings and In-Laws:

Antonia L. Taman and Children
 Maggie I. Mettao & Pedro R. Lisua and Children
 Children of †Crispin R. and †Dionicia I. Lisua
 Maria I. & Michael K. Somorang and Children
 Joaquin V. Iginoef and Children
 Dominic F. Fitial
 Luella I. and Herman C. Lieto and Children
 Elia O. & Bernard Santos and Children
 Romeo O. & Lorna O. Iginoef and Children
 Gregory Paul M. Iginoef & Angie L. Teregeyo and Children
 Sharma I. & Bruce Laniyo and Children
 Lorenza O. Iginoef & Jesus L. Ruben and Children
 Jennifer O. Iginoef & Jack L. Ruben and Children
 Carmen O. Iginoef & BJ Tagabuel and Children
 Eddie A. & Maggie B. Cabrera and Children
 Ignacio A. Cabrera & Zhen and Children
 Juan A. Cabrera & Priscilla Kiyoshi and Children
 Natividad A. Cabrera & Hy Tong

Mass for His Reposed Soul is being offered at Kristo Rai Church every 6:00 in the morning.

On January 13, 2017, Friday, his body will be escorted from CHCC Morgue to Kristo Rai Church at 7:00am for his funeral services, responso and rosary will follow immediately upon arrival. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 10:30am, followed by Interment Service at Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.

Si Yu’us Ma’ase and Olomwaay for your thoughts and prayers.

Terry Cabrera Iginoef, Children, Grandchildren and Family
Also from Villagomez, Iginoef and Cabrera Families

Chef brings attention to cuisine of Melania Trump's homeland

NEW YORK (AP)—A master chef is bringing attention to the cuisine of Melania Trump's homeland.

Ana Ros (pronounced ROSH), who starred last year in an episode of the "Chef's Table" Netflix series, runs what some consider Slovenia's best restaurant in a remote village inn.

Slovenian tourism officials recently brought Ros to New York to showcase her culinary talents at a time when tourism in the tiny country is booming, up to nearly 3 million tourists a year in a country of 2 million people.

Ros heads the kitchen in an inn called Hisa Franko (Frank's house). Her ever-changing menu there reads like no other, to name just a few dishes: fried white asparagus with celery cream; arctic char with wild berries and buttermilk; pasta filled with whipped cheese from sheep in nearby pastures, served with langoustines and mushrooms; and pork and lobster with ginger and pickled garlic on a bed of ancient Indian herbal leaves.

Ros' husband, cheese and wine expert Valter Kramar, inherited Hisa Franko and a small farm from his father. The

inn is located in the remote village of Kobarid, in the western part of the country, surrounded by pine forests in the emerald Soca River Valley. It was here that Ernest Hemingway set part of his World War I novel,

"A Farewell to Arms."

"We can see Italy and the boats in the Adriatic Sea," said Ros, looking exuberant as she described the sight. The Italian border is just a mile away.

Ros' cooking skills are

largely self-taught, though she was mentored by culinary luminaries to become a master chef of a surprising cuisine. "I found my own way of creating that's in some way freer," she says, adding that the only

thing she'd hate to hear from guests "would be that the dinner was boring."

Ros, 44, and Kramar, 49, have traveled the world, blending global tastes and techniques with ingredients from local

fields and barns, and their own vegetable and herb garden. In some ways, Ros' menus reflect the cross-currents that define Slovenia, nestled as it is between Italy, Austria, Hungary and Croatia.



This April 2016 photo provided by Hisa Franko shows a dish by chef Ana Ros at her restaurant, Hisa Franko, in the remote village of Kobarid, in the western part of Slovenia.

Debbie Reynolds' death certificate confirms stroke

LOS ANGELES (AP)—

Debbie Reynolds died of a stroke and her daughter Carrie Fisher died of cardiac arrest, according to their death certificates.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health issued Reynolds' death certificate in the name of Mary Frances Reynolds. It was obtained Tuesday by The Associated Press.

Under "cause of death" it says "intracerebral hemorrhage," a type of stroke caused by bleeding in the brain rather than the more common type caused by a clot. The certificate lists high blood pressure as an underlying cause.

Reynolds died at 84 on Dec.

Book sales suspended for Trump aide accused of plagiarism

NEW YORK (AP)—The

publisher of Monica Crowley's "What the (Bleep) Just Happened?" said Tuesday it is halting sales of the book, pending the "opportunity" for the aide to President-elect Donald Trump to revise her text.

Crowley is a syndicated talk show host and Trump's pick to serve as director of communications at the White House's National Security Council. She is accused of plagiarizing numerous passages in the 2012 book, an anti-Obama work that was praised by future Trump supporters Sarah Palin and Rudolph Giuliani, among others.

On Tuesday, HarperCollins announced the book and its 2013 edition, "What the (Bleep) Just Happened . . . Again?" will "no longer be offered for purchase until such time as the author has the opportunity to source and revise

the material."

Both editions have the same basic material, but the 2013 book includes a new foreword, in which Crowley responds to Obama's re-election.

The hardcover of "What the (Bleep) Just Happened?" is out of print, but the 2012 edition has been available as an e-book. As of Tuesday morning, "What the (Bleep) Just Happened . . . Again?" was available as a paperback.

By midday, links to both books had been removed from Amazon.com, but remained on Barnes & Noble.com.

CNN first reported over the weekend that Crowley appeared to have plagiarized large sections of her book.

Their review found more than 50 examples of apparent plagiarism from sources that include news articles and Wikipedia.

Trump's transition team came to Crowley's defense,

dismissing the allegation as "nothing more than a politically motivated attack that seeks to distract from the real issues facing this country."

Politico Magazine published evidence this week suggesting Crowley had also plagiarizing several sections of her doctoral dissertation at Columbia University. The publication found more than a dozen instances in which Crowley appeared to lift from other works without providing proper attribution.

Transition officials have not responded to questions about the allegations regarding Crowley's academic work or HarperCollins' decision to suspend sales of her book.

Crowley also faced plagiarism allegations in 1999 after a piece she wrote on the 25th anniversary of President Richard Nixon's resignation ran in The Wall Street Journal.

Contest will pick opening acts for Bon Jovi tour

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP)—Who says you can't open for Bon Jovi?

The New Jersey-based platinum-selling rockers are holding a contest to choose bands or singers to open for their upcoming tour.

Artists will upload videos of themselves performing original music, and concert promoters Live Nation will select 10 finalists.

Bon Jovi management will then pick winners from the finalists to perform 20-minute sets.

"Every great band starts small and builds their rep one

show at a time," Jon Bon Jovi said Tuesday in a statement on the band's website announcing the contest. "That's the opportunity we were given, and now we want to pay it forward. If you're ready for the arena stage, submit your audition tapes and join us in playing for the best audiences in rock music."

Formed in Sayreville, New Jersey, the fledgling Bon Jovi landed opening act gigs with some of the biggest names in music at the time, including ZZ Top in 1983, and the Scorpions, Kiss and Ted Nugent in 1984, exposing them to millions of new fans.

The band will begin its "This House Is Not For Sale" tour Feb. 8 in Greenville, South Carolina. The last listed tour date is April 11 in Toronto, but additional dates are expected to be announced.

Entries will be judged on entertainment value, creativity and originality. No-nos include profanity, nudity, violence, drug or alcohol use, commercial endorsements of products, and disparagement of any group of people.

In addition to performing live, the winners will be featured on the Bon Jovi and Live Nation Facebook pages.

Celebrating His New Life

RALPH MASAO HAYASHI

Born: January 24, 1938
Went Peacefully Into God's Loving Care on December 31, 2016

His Loving Memories Will Forever Live In The Hearts Of His:

Wife: Marilyn B. Hayashi

Children: Cris Hayashi, Cherri Ritter, Staci Alici B. Hayashi & Ralph Marc B. Hayashi

Christian funeral will be held in Pangasinan, Philippines on January 14, 2017 at 8:00 am.

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers from the Family.

Investigators: 'Inside job' suspected in Kardashian robbery

PARIS (AP)—Investigators in Paris focused Tuesday on the possibility that the October robbery of more than \$10 million worth of jewelry from Kim Kardashian West was an inside job following the arrests of a chauffeur and his brother.

Three Paris officials, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the ongoing investigation, confirmed that Kardashian West's driver the night of the robbery and

his brother were among 17 people taken into custody Monday.

Michael Madar, 40, and Gary Madar, 27, worked for the same livery company, according to two of the officials. The officials were unsure which brother chauffeured the reality TV star the night she was robbed in a rented apartment in the French capital.

An investigating judge may travel to the United States to speak with Kardashian West,

a judicial official said, adding that such a trip would not be imminent. The official was not authorized to speak publicly about the investigation and asked not to be named.

The suspects ranged in age from 23 to 72 and included several people known for prior robberies and other crimes, according to a police docu-

ment seen by The Associated Press.

Police officials said on Monday that subsequent searches of properties associated with the suspects yielded weapons and 140,000 euros (\$147,500)

in cash. The judicial official could not immediately confirm a French press report Tuesday that more than double that amount of money had

been recovered as the inventory proceeded.

French law requires the suspects to be freed by early Friday if they are not charged by then, according to the judicial official, who did not exclude the possibility that some of those detained could be let go earlier.

The police officials would not elaborate on how they believe the theft was planned. Kardashian West's bodyguard was gone for the night, and the

robbers forced their way into the private apartment where she was staying, tied her up and made off with the jewelry.

Earlier this month, Kardashian West broke her silence on the robbery in a teaser for her family's reality show, telling two of her sisters her thoughts at the time: "They're going to shoot me in the back. There's no way out."

A spokeswoman for the reality star said she had no comment after Monday's arrests.



SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Report: Fox News settled harassment claims against O'Reilly

NEW YORK (AP)—A former Fox News personality who accused Bill O'Reilly of sexual harassment was paid a sum in the high six figures by the network's parent company in exchange for her silence and agreement not to sue, The New York Times reported Tuesday. The employee, Juliet Huddy, said O'Reilly, the network's biggest star, pursued a sexual relationship with her in 2011. When she rebuffed O'Reilly's advances, he tried to derail her career, the Times reported, citing a letter from her lawyers to Fox News it obtained. The secret agreement was reportedly struck between Huddy and network parent 21st Century Fox in September, weeks after Roger Ailes was ousted as network chairman amid a sexual harassment scandal. A Fox News spokeswoman said, "Juliet Huddy's letter of intent to sue contained substantial falsehoods which Bill O'Reilly vehemently denied." A representative for Huddy had no comment.

Jenna Elfman tries again for TV comedic success

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—Jenna Elfman is taking aim again at finding comedic success on television. The actress best known for her hit ABC show "Dharma & Greg" that ran from 1997 to 2002 is back on the same network with "Imaginary Mary." Elfman plays a woman dating a man with children. Her character relies on an imaginary friend voiced by Rachel Dratch of "Saturday Night Live" fame. Elfman has had starring roles in six comedies since 1996-97. Only "Dharma & Greg" lasted more than a single season. "I'm always looking for writing I feel I can express myself in a true way," she told the Television Critics Association winter gathering on Tuesday.

Her latest role presents challenges similar to what Elfman faced in the 2003 movie "Looney Tunes: Back in Action." Back then, she was acting against a green screen. Now, she rehearses with a life-sized puppet and another actress on set who does Dratch's lines since she's based in New York

and the show is shot in Los Angeles. The puppet is removed for filming, when Elfman is interacting with Stephen Schneider, who plays her boyfriend, and his children. The boyfriend doesn't see or hear the imaginary friend. "It was actually a really great challenge," Elfman said. "I liked the challenge of maintaining all these things. I felt super-engaged on set all the time."

Prince estate signs merchandising deal with UMG's Bravado

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Prince's estate has signed a merchandising deal naming Universal Music Group's Bravado unit as its exclusive branding and licensing partner worldwide. Tuesday's announcement says Bravado will work with the estate to manage retail and licensing endeavors for Prince's brand. Bravado CEO Mat Vlasic says it will ensure that Prince "continues to thrill fans and impact culture around the world." Prince's entertainment assets are being managed under court orders by industry

experts Charles Koppelman and L. Londell McMillan, who say the deal will support Prince's legacy and give fans new opportunities to connect with him. Prince died of an accidental painkiller overdose in April. A Minnesota judge is expected to declare his siblings heirs to his estate, which court filings suggest is worth about \$200 million.

London's Royal Albert Hall offers rare sale of private box

LONDON (AP)—Britain's historic Royal Albert Hall is offering a rare chance for a deep-pocketed arts lover to sit near Queen Elizabeth for music performances, films and fundraisers. A 12-seat private box on the upper tier is open for "offers above 2.5 million pounds (\$3 million)," Nicholas Shaw, sales manager for Harrods Estates, said on Tuesday. The debenture on the box lasts 849 years, and "can be handed down for generations," he says. He expects the buyer to be British. The hall opened in London in 1871. Of its 5,272 seats, around 1,300

are privately owned. The box for sale is five boxes away from the Queen's, Shaw says. This year's British Academy film awards will be held at the hall. Performances are regularly attended by members of the royal family.

Solange calls Beyoncé 'master class' for musical success

Solange says growing up in a house with older sister Beyoncé was like a "master class" for becoming a musical success. Beyoncé talked to Solange for a piece in Interview magazine published online Tuesday. Beyoncé acknowledged to Solange that talking to her sister for an interview was "a bit strange," but added that she was her sister's "biggest fan." Solange told her sister she "got to have a lot of practice" working on her music in their Houston home, telling Beyoncé their mother "always taught us to be in control of our voice and our bodies and our work." When Beyoncé asked how she did as a big sister, Solange gave her a positive review, calling

her "the most patient, loving, wonderful sister ever."

Breedlove, land-speed record breaker, can sue Chicago museum

CHICAGO (AP)—A judge has ruled that Craig Breedlove can move forward with his legal claim that Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry damaged the jet car he used to set a land-speed record at the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah in 1964.

The Chicago Tribune reports the 79-year-old Breedlove says the museum caused more than \$395,000 in damage to his Spirit of America car. It was displayed at the museum for 50 years and returned to Breedlove in October 2015. Breedlove, of Rio Vista, California, filed an amended complaint in October, including supporting documents on the American Association of Museums' standards and best practices. The judge ruled last week that he can sue. Museum spokeswoman Renee Mailhot said in an email Monday that the institution takes its responsibility to care for its collection seriously.

Girl who shies away from gym can enjoy a good, long walk

DEAR ABBY: My mom wants me to exercise more. Currently, I just walk a lot (in my house and around the block). I know exercise is a good idea, but I'm really self-conscious about it. I never feel like I'm doing it right (because I know you can easily pull a muscle), and I feel like everyone else in the gym is judging me.

Now that I'm 17, Mom expects me to be more mature about this. I don't even feel comfortable swimming in public places anymore. I feel stressed about it, but Mom just thinks I'm being picky.

Being in a gym makes me feel unhappy and judged. I wish there was a better way to exercise, but I don't know what. How can I get my mom to understand how hard this is for me?

WONDERING IN WICHITA

DEAR WONDERING: Going to a gym can be fun if you do it with a buddy. Most of the people there are more concerned with what THEY are doing than what anyone else is. That said, going to the gym isn't for everyone. There are many forms of exercise.

Tell your mother you would prefer to exercise on your own rather than go to a gym. Then put on your walking shoes, leave the house and walk for 20 to 30 minutes a day. It's good for you. Listen to music when you're doing it and it will make the time go quickly. And on days when you don't want to go outside, put on some music and dance. It's good for the circulation, and it's also good for the soul.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married for 44 years. We eloped in high school and still feel like newlyweds. We built a successful business, ran it for 40 years and recently had an opportunity to sell it.

The problem is my mother. We bought a second home in California, but kept our first home. Every time I call to ask how she and Dad are doing, she responds with, "You don't care how we are. If you did, you would be here."

I love our new life. Our kids are grown, and we are enjoying ourselves to the fullest. We are both in excellent health, and still young at heart. How can we tell her that we have a life we love without her being so resentful?

LOVING LIFE IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR LOVING: You can't, because your mother feels you should be at her beck and call. She has had you close since you were a child, and now she may be feeling deserted.

At this point, I don't advise telling your mother that you "have a life you love" without her. Instead, I suggest that you phrase your greeting to her more carefully.

Rather than ask how she and your dad are doing, say that you are "calling to check in." Say that you were thinking about her. And if she starts in with "you don't care," tell her that you DO care or you wouldn't be on the phone with her, but if she keeps giving you a guilt trip, she'll be hearing from you less.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR ABBY: If you go to a party and bring something (chips, soda, etc.), what is the rule of etiquette about taking it home when you leave?

PRACTICAL IN IDAHO

DEAR PRACTICAL: When someone brings food to a party, it could be considered a host/hostess gift. Before taking any of it home, first ask your host or hostess if it would be all right. While some people wouldn't mind, others may, so you shouldn't assume that because you brought something that the leftovers are yours.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

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- Salary: Negotiable

Submit a typed resume or call 670-235-8938 to arrange for an interview before or on **18th JANUARY 2017**. Interview will be conducted from 19th - 27th January 2017 at 3A'S POLYSHINE, CK, Beach Road.

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DeRozan powers Raptors in comeback win over Celtics



TORONTO (AP)—Faced with the possibility of their longest losing streak in over a year, DeMar DeRozan and the Toronto Raptors finally hit their stride.

DeRozan had a season-high 41 points and Toronto overcame a late 16-point deficit to beat the Boston Celtics 114-106 on Tuesday night.

The win snapped Boston's four-game winning streak and helped Toronto avoid a three-game skid.

"You're going to lose games in this league," DeRozan said after pulling down a career-high 13 rebounds. "But you don't want to make it more than one."

The Raptors bounced back after losing to Chicago and Houston over the weekend and haven't lost three straight since a West Coast trip in November 2015 when they came up short in Sacramento, Utah and Golden State.

Toronto also kept itself above Boston in the Eastern Conference standings. A win would have pulled the Celtics even with the Raptors for second place behind Cleveland.

Raptors coach Dwane Casey called the game a "bloodbath." Toronto prevailed on the boards, 50-33, thanks largely to Jonas Valanciunas. The Lithuanian center had a career-high 23 rebounds to go with 18 points.

The rebounding helped fuel Toronto's 19-4 run over the final 5:05 to overturn what had been a 102-95 deficit.

"He had some sticky stuff on his hands today so he caught everything that came off the rim," DeRozan said of his teammate. "He gave us the opportunity to have those possessions and get back in the game."

Boston led from the second quarter until Kyle Lowry's 3-pointer with 2:41 to play gave the lead back to Toronto. The Raptors had pulled within four at the end of the third quarter, mainly on the strength of DeRozan's 19 points in those 12 minutes, but Celtics coach Brad Stevens said the end of both the third and the fourth quarters proved costly.

"The last six minutes of the third crushed us, and the last six minutes of the fourth," he said. "I think it was like 42-15 or something in those timeframes."

Isiah Thomas had 27 points for Boston.

"We gave them fouls and offensive rebounds. They took advantage of that," Thomas said. "That's probably the big thing. If we would have got a few more stops, we would



ill Giannis Antetokounmpo, and Milwaukee rallied to beat San Antonio.

Kawhi Leonard had 30 points for the Spurs, who had their nine-game home winning streak snapped.

Jabari Parker's layup with 2:56 remaining gave Milwaukee a 103-101 lead, its first since the 3:24 mark of the first quarter. Moments later, rookie Malcolm Brogdon hit a 3-pointer to give the Bucks a 108-107 edge. Brogdon sank one of two free throws with 6.7 seconds to go, and Manu Ginobili's 3-pointer hit the side of the backboard at the buzzer.

Antetokounmpo, who missed Milwaukee's previous game, started despite having a fever at morning shootaround. He was scoreless for the first time this season, missing his only three attempts in nine minutes.

Beasley responded with 22 points in the second half.

Spurs forward LaMarcus Aldridge was sidelined with a stomach virus.

Hawks 117, Nets 97

In New York, Dennis Schroder had 19 points and 10 assists, Dwight Howard added 14 points and 16 rebounds, and Atlanta beat skidding Brooklyn to win its season-high seventh straight.

Paul Millsap added 14 points for the Hawks, who led the entire way and have won eight of their last nine road games.

Brook Lopez scored 20 points for the Nets, who have lost seven in a row and 12 of 13.

Nets coach Kenny Atkinson was a Hawks assistant for four years, the last three (2013-16) under current Atlanta coach Mike Budenholzer.

Warriors 107, Heat 95

In Oakland, Calif., Stephen Curry had 24 points, nine assists and eight rebounds, Kevin Durant added 28 points and Golden State picked it up late to beat Miami.

Durant also had eight rebounds and Draymond Green had 13 points, nine rebounds and five assists in the Warriors' fifth straight win against the Heat and eighth in 10, including three in a row at home.

Bucks 109, Spurs 107

In San Antonio, Michael Beasley scored a season-high 28 points in place of an

Klay Thompson had the night off for rest after he played through illness the past two games.

Hassan Whiteside had 28 points and 20 rebounds for the Heat, outscored 26-14 in the third quarter after leading 54-53 at halftime. Miami lost its third straight game and dropped to 1-4 on a six-game road trip.

Trail Blazers 108, Lakers 87

In Los Angeles, C.J. McCollum scored 25 points and Portland used a dominant third quarter to defeat Los Angeles for the 10th consecutive time.

The Trail Blazers were down by two to start the second half, but held the Lakers to 21.7 percent shooting (5 of 23) and blocked four shots in the third quarter, outscoring Los Angeles 23-12.

Damian Lillard overcame an 0-for-8 start to finish with 20 points, eight rebounds and six assists for Portland. Al-Farouq Aminu had 15 rebounds, and Maurice Harkless scored 14 points.

The Lakers shot 38.6 percent for the game. Luol Deng led them with 14 points but did not make a field goal after the first half.

Kings 100, Pistons 94

In Sacramento, Calif., DeMarcus Cousins had 24 points, 13 rebounds and six assists to help Sacramento stage a fourth-quarter comeback in defeating Detroit.

The Pistons led by nine entering the fourth, when they were outscored 32-17. The victory snapped a three-game losing streak for the Kings, who had lost five of six since winning a season-high four straight.

Anthony Tolliver added 17 points for Sacramento, and Kosta Koufos scored eight of his 12 in the final period.

The Kings closed the game with an 11-2 run, and Detroit went scoreless over the final 1:15. Sacramento made four 3-pointers in the fourth and was 13 of 24 overall from beyond the arc, including 4 of 5 for Cousins.

Kentavious Caldwell-Pope made six 3s and had 21 points for the Pistons, who had won three of four.

have been all right."

Rockets 121, Hornets 114
In Houston, James Harden had 40 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists for his second consecutive triple-double, and Houston outlasted Charlotte for its ninth straight win.

Trey Lyles scored eight straight points, including a pair of 3-pointers, in the fourth quarter to help the Jazz hold on.

Rudy Gobert had 11 points and 14 rebounds for Utah.

James finished with 29 points and Kyrie Irving added 20 for the defending champs. Kyle Korver had two points and three rebounds in 17 minutes during his Cleveland debut.

Wizards 101, Bulls 99

In Washington, John Wall scored 26 points, including a game-winning baseline jumper with 5.9 seconds left, and added 14 assists as Washington moved above .500 by defeating Chicago.

Marcin Gortat had 10 points and 12 rebounds for Washington (19-18). He also set the

beat Cleveland.

Hayward had 28 points and went back and forth with James during a decisive third quarter. James brought the Cavaliers back from a 15-point halftime deficit before Hayward drove the lead back to 14.

Markieff Morris and Bradley Beal each scored 19 points for the Wizards, who completed their biggest comeback victory of the season after trailing by 18 in the second quarter.

Washington is above .500 for the first time since it was 6-5 last season on Nov. 24, 2015.

Denzel Valentine set career highs by scoring 19 points and making five 3-pointers for the short-handed Bulls, who led by seven in the fourth quarter.

Rajon Rondo added 12 points in his first game since Dec. 30.

Chicago was without leading scorers Jimmy Butler (ill) and Dwyane Wade (resting). Bulls forward Nikola Mirotic also sat out with an illness.

Wall hit a pull-up that tied it at 99 with 47.4 seconds to play.

Bucks 109, Spurs 107

In San Antonio, Michael Beasley scored a season-high 28 points in place of an

Knicks fine Rose for missing game, he cites family reasons

NEW YORK (AP)—Derrick Rose has returned to practice with the New York Knicks after missing their game the night before for what he described as family reasons.

The Knicks' public relations department posted a photo on Twitter on Tuesday that showed Rose in his No. 25 practice jersey, standing

with his teammates at their training facility in Greenburgh, New York.

The team later announced he had been fined for missing the 110-96 loss to New Orleans on Monday and said he was expected to be in uniform Wednesday night in Philadelphia.

Rose told reporters he had returned to Chicago for family

reasons and that his absence had nothing to do with basketball. He said he apologized to his teammates and Knicks management, telling them it wouldn't happen again.

On Monday, Rose worked out with the Knicks at their morning shootaround, but they announced as the game was starting that he was not

with the team. Center Joakim Noah said he spoke to Rose after the game and that he was OK.

The 2011 NBA MVP, Rose has played in 33 games for the Knicks this season, averaging 17.3 points. But he had been on the bench for the fourth quarters in the previous two games before Monday.

Broadway Brock? Can Osweiler lead Texans to historic upset

By ROB MAADDI
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

NFL Before this weekend, just five NFL playoff games since 1966 have featured a team favored by at least 15 points. Just one of those underdogs won the game (Google “Joe Namath” if you need more information on that).

Oddsmakers don’t think Brock Osweiler should guarantee the 16-point underdog Houston Texans can beat Tom Brady and the Patriots in New England. In fact, even if Brady were not playing, the Patriots would be favored by nearly two touchdowns.

“Normally, he is worth six to seven points to the spread, depending on the opponent,” said Scott Cooley, spokesman for BookMaker, an offshore book and casino. “But in this situation it changes a bit because the Patriots have a very capable backup in Jimmy Garoppolo, who we’ve seen perform well in meaningful games. If Brady wasn’t playing this weekend, we would make the Patriots 12- to 13-point favorites.”

The Patriots (14-2) beat the Texans 27-0 in Week 3 with third-string quarterback Jacoby Brissett leading the way.

Brady, of course, will be under center against the Texans and he’s playing some of his best football. He’s taking nothing for granted because coach Bill Belichick wouldn’t have it another way.

“There is nothing easy about this game for our offense,” Brady said on WEEI radio in Boston.

Osweiler is 1-0 against Brady. Peyton Manning’s former backup rallied Den-



Houston Texans quarterback Brock Osweiler (17) scrambles for a first down against Oakland Raiders defensive end Mario Edwards (97) during the first half of an AFC Wild Card NFL football game Saturday, Jan. 7, 2017, in Houston. AP

ver from a 21-7 deficit in the fourth quarter to beat the Patriots 30-24 in overtime last season.

But this isn’t the same Osweiler—he was benched last month—and the Texans (10-7) are not last year’s Super Bowl champion Broncos.

The Patriots are used to double-digit point spreads in the playoffs. They’ve been involved in the five largest spreads since 2000, according to Pro Football Reference. They’re only

1-3 covering the spread as favorites, but 3-1 in the win/loss column.

New England was a 14-point underdog when it upset the Rams in the 2002 Super Bowl. After going 16-0 in 2007, the Patriots failed to cover three times as favorites of 12 1/2 or more in the playoffs. They defeated the Jaguars and Chargers before losing to the Giants in the Super Bowl.

In 2012, they whipped Tim Tebow and the Broncos 45-10

in the divisional round to cover a 13 1/2-point spread.

Pro Football Reference lists 59 double-digit favorites in playoff games since the Super Bowl began in January 1967. The favorites are 33-25-1 against the spread and 47-12 straight up.

The five biggest point spreads in the playoffs since 1966:

■ 19 points: 49ers vs. Chargers in 1995 Super Bowl. Steve Young threw six touchdown passes, including three

to Jerry Rice, to lead San Francisco to a 49-26 victory and its fifth Vince Lombardi Trophy.

■ 18 points: Colts vs. Jets in 1969 Super Bowl. Namath guaranteed a win for the underdog Jets and delivered. Broadway Joe threw for 206 yards, Matt Snell had 121 yards rushing and a TD and Jim Turner kicked three field goals in New York’s 16-7 victory over Baltimore.

■ 16 1/2 points: Vikings vs. Cardinals in 1999 NFC divisional round. Randall Cun-

ningham tossed three TD passes, including one to rookie Randy Moss, to lead the Vikings to a 41-21 win.

■ 15 1/2 points: 49ers vs. Bears in 1995 NFC divisional round. William Floyd ran for three TDs and San Francisco routed Chicago 44-15.

■ 15 points: Cowboys vs. Falcons in 1978 NFC divisional round. Danny White replaced Roger Staubach after he sustained a concussion and led the Cowboys to a 27-20 win, but not a cover.

Clemson fans turn out to welcome national champions

2016 CLEMSON, S.C. (AP)—

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP About 6,000 Clemson fans turned out Tuesday to welcome their national champion Tigers, capping a giddy day of celebration after their team toppled Alabama.

People screamed as the buses pulled up, calling out “DE-SHAUN” over and over as Tigers’ star quarterback Deshaun Watson walked with his luggage and national championship hat into Clemson’s football building.

“This means a lot,” said receiver Mike Williams, who like Watson will forego his final year in college and enter the NFL draft.

And what a way to leave. Watson accounted for 463 yards and four touchdowns in the 35-31 win over the top-

ranked and seemingly unbeatable Crimson Tide. Watson’s final college pass was a two-yard throw to Hunter Renfrow for the game-winning score with a second left.

Watson walked to the crowd, which was kept behind metal barriers, to sign a few autographs and share a few hugs before waving and heading off. Clemson fans will get one more chance to see Watson and the rest of the Tigers on Saturday during a parade through town that will end inside Clem-

son’s Death Valley.

After that, Watson, Williams and many of the Tigers who helped Clemson overcome a 14-point deficit win its national title rematch with Alabama will scatter to train for their next showcase: Clem-

son’s pro timing day in front of NFL executives and scouts in early March.

But on Tuesday it was time for them to take another bow in front of a happy crowd.

Fans waved all kinds of signs, some simply saying “Thank You, Tigers,” to more pointed ones that read “We Want Bama” with the “Want” crossed out and replaced by “Beat.” There was even a sign asking if head coach Dabo Swinney’s son, high-school senior Will, would take the sash-holder to prom.

“We couldn’t do this without these people,” said Ben Boulware, Clemson’s leading tackler who gave a stirring speech thanking the team’s past players as the confetti fell in Tampa, Florida, at Raymond James Sta-

dium. “They’ve been here for all of it.”

There was a sizeable crowd of Clemson fans in Tampa with a smaller, but just as thrilled, group that watched the game on large screens in the middle of the blocked-off College Avenue on Monday night. After the dramatic win, the celebration lasted well into the morning. Clemson police said there were no serious incidents or vandalism, although six people were arrested on alcohol-related charges.

Fans spent much of Tuesday swarming souvenir shops in town, snapping up whatever “national champions” apparel they could find. They filtered over to the stadium around midday, awaiting the buses to pull in front. Artavis Scott,

who became the Tigers’ all-time leader in pass catches this year, was first off and pumped his fist as fans shouted back.

“We have the best fans in college football,” Boulware said. “I know when Alabama won it last year, they didn’t have fans show up like this. The culture at Clemson is uncommon, so I’m super happy for our community.”

Boulware is among four senior defensive starters who will be leaving. Clemson is also losing the team’s sacks leader in defensive tackle Carlos Watkins and two members of the secondary—cornerback Cordrea Tankersley and safety Jadar Johnson. The losses on offense are even more daunting with Watson, Williams, Scott, tight end Jordan Leggett,

single-season rushing leader Wayne Gallman and Jay Guillermo all entering the NFL draft.

Defensive end Christian Wilkins, however, believes Clemson’s run at the top is not over.

“We’ve always recruited well. People had questions about the defense the past couple of years and you can see what we’ve done,” said Wilkins, a sophomore. “We think the same thing can happen on offense.”

Wilkins, who’s celebratory postgame split in Tampa went viral, was glad to celebrate back home with fans who’ve supported him throughout his career.

“We just dream of this moment forever and that’s why you come to Clemson,” he said. “We showed the world what we’re made of last night.”

McDonald's, CUC win debuts in JEM caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

McDonald's and Commonwealth Utilities Corp. got off to a good start after prevailing in their first games in the 2017 JEM Company Ltd./Mobil Customer Appreciation Basketball League last Tuesday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

CUC pulled off a come-from-behind win over Joeten in the curtain-raiser, 72-69, while McDonald's eased past Best Deal/RNV Construction in the second match, 80-65. CUC and McDonald's joined opening day victors Docomo and TanHoldings 1 in the win column in Pool A.

After falling behind in the majority of the match and facing an 11-point deficit midway in the third, CUC fought back in the final canto to steal the win from Joeten. John Santos hit a clutch triple, while Frank Simada and Robert Lieto scored the team's last two field



goals to lift CUC to the 3-point win. Eugene Manglona also helped out in CUC's fourth-

quarter rally, scoring 6 of his 10 markers earlier in that period.

Joeten collapsed in the end,

as it played the second half sans Sid Quan and Ferdie Tobias was held to 2 points after

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Joeten's Chris Rogolifo is hounded by CUC defenders during the third quarter of their game in the JEM/Mobil caging last Tuesday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

a strong game in the third quarter. Quan had to leave at halftime to suit up for another team in a playoff game at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium, while Tobias made only one field goal in the final canto after sizzling for 12 in the penultimate frame.

Meanwhile, in the second game, McDonald's drew 20-point plus production from Sherwin Gaspar and Jon Macaranas to whip Best Deal/RNV Construction.

Gaspar had a team-high 22 points, while Macaranas chipped in 21 and their combined output offset the game-high 30 points of Andy Mortos for Best Deal/RNV Construction.



With Gaspar and Macaranas catching fire early, McDonald's led right from the get-go and then played even better in the second half for to win its debut.

First Game

CUC 72 – Santos 20, Manglona 10, Lie to 8, Kaipat 8, Simada 7, Poquiz 4, Camacho 4, Pestillo 4, Mira 2.

Joeten 69 – Lauron 23, Tobias 18, Rogolifo 15, Quan 9, Samible 4.

Scoring by quarters: 13-21, 31-39, 54-58, 72-69.

Second Game

McDonald's 80 – Gaspar 22, Macaranas 21, J. Achas 11, M. Achas 7, Gapor 4, Risua 4, C. Achas 2, Salinas 2.

Best Deal 65 – Mortos 30, Rueda 14, Odicita 6, Alfonso 6, Jumaquio 4, Nael 2, Cabalquinto 2.

Scoring by quarters: 20-13, 38-33, 58-48, 80-65.

Jansen, Dodgers finalize \$80 million, 5-year contract



LOS ANGELES (AP) —

Kenley Jansen is coming back to close games for the Los Angeles Dodgers after finalizing an \$80 million, five-year contract.

The team announced the deal Tuesday with the 29-year-old free agent right-hander, who earned his first All-Star selection last year. The contract was agreed to Dec. 12, subject to a physical.

Jansen gets a \$4 million signing bonus payable on Thursday and salaries of \$10 million in each of the first two seasons, \$18 million apiece in 2019 and 2020, and \$20 million in 2021. He can opt out after the 2019 season and become a free agent again.

In addition, Jansen would receive a \$1 million bonus if traded.

His agreement has a \$16 million average annual value and raises the Dodgers' pro-

jected luxury tax payroll to about \$230 million if there are no major roster changes. That would lead to a tax of about \$19 million.

To make room on the 40-man roster, the Dodgers designated infielder Micah Johnson for assignment.

Jansen and third baseman Justin Turner were scheduled to discuss their decisions at Dodger Stadium on Wednesday.

In addition, left-hander Vidal Nuno agreed to a one-year contract worth \$1,125,000, up from \$532,900 last year. He was acquired in November from Seattle for catcher Carlos Ruiz.

Jansen was 3-2 with a 1.83 ERA and a career-high 47 saves, tied for second in the major leagues, in 53 chances last season. He ranked second among NL relief leaders with a 1.83 ERA, fifth with 104 strikeouts and first with a 9.45 strikeout-to-walk ratio.

Jansen threw scoreless relief in six of seven postseason appearances.

He is 19-13 with a 2.20 ERA and 189 saves in seven major league seasons with the Dodgers since making his big league debut in 2010.

Last season, Jansen became the franchise saves leader with 189 and strikeouts as a reliever with 632.

The native of Curacao was signed by the Dodgers in 2004 and spent the first five years of his career as a catcher before converting to pitcher in 2009.

Nuno appeared in a career-high 55 games last year for the Mariners, all but one in relief, and was 1-1 with a 3.53 ERA.

Four Dodgers remain eligible for salary arbitration: catcher Yasmani Grandal, right-hander Josh Fields, left-handers Luis Avilan and Alex Wood.

OL'ACES

From Page 28

24 markers.

Sid Quan also had a 20-plus output (22) in Ace Hardware's 10-point winning margin.

His consistent scoring plus the support from Marvin Rabauliman, Ken Viray, and Dave Camacho allowed Ace Hardware to maintain its safe distance against the Junior Ol'aces. Rabauliman chipped in 15, while Viray and Camacho contributed 13 and 10, respectively.

With the victory, Ace Hardware will face the winner of the playoff match between

Saipan Apparel and GMI Market on Tuesday (Jan. 17), the start of the double-elimination semis. Saipan Apparel and GMI Market will collide in the win-or-go-home match tonight at 6:30pm.

Also set for a make-or-break tiff today at 8pm are Duenas Compound and the San Antonio Patriots with the winner battling the Ol'aces at the start of the Final Four round.

First Game

Ace Hardware 65 – Quan 22, Rabauliman 15, Viray 13, Camacho 10, Babauta 4, Hammond 2.

Junior Ol'aces 55 – Castro 25, Kabiriel 8, Siech 6, Norita 5, Blake 4, Borja 2, Sablan 2.

Scoring by quarters: 20-12, 37-19, 51-36, 65-55.

Second Game

Ol'aces 93 – Iguel 24, Pelisamen 17, Barcina 13, Nakashima 5, Palino 5, Iginoef 5, Basa 4, Libuw 4, Villacrusis 4, Santos, Deleon Guerrero 3.

5-Star Construction 68 – Fernando 24, Hernaez 14, Cabanas 11, Pineda 8, Estanislaco 4, Pangelinan 4, Cabigting 4, Arnold 3.

Scoring by quarters: 20-14, 50-32, 64-53, 93-68.

Mets, Mejia go through formality of agreeing to contract

NEW YORK (AP) — Suspended relief pitcher Jenrry Mejia and the New York Mets went through the formality Tuesday of agreeing to a one-year contract worth \$1,976,000, money he will not ever receive.

Mejia was given a lifetime ban from baseball last Feb. 12 after his third positive test under the major league drug program. He remains on the Mets roster on the restricted list, and because he has four

years of major league service he was eligible for salary arbitration. However, players serving drug suspensions do not get paid.

Mejia's salary was cut the maximum 20 percent from his \$2.47 million salary last year—money he also did not receive.

Mejia was suspended for 80 games on April 11, 2015, following a positive test for Stanazolol, a drug popular among bodybuilders, and ad-

mitted then he took a banned substance. He returned that July 12, appeared in seven games for New York, then was suspended for 162 games that July 28 after a positive test for Stanazolol and Boldenone.

His third positive test was for Boldenone. Mejia denied taking any substances that triggered the second and third positive tests.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	Atlantic Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	25	13	.658	—	
Boston	23	15	.605	2	
New York	17	21	.447	8	
Philadelphia	10	25	.286	13½	
Brooklyn	8	29	.216	16½	

Southeast Division

Atlanta	22	16	.579	—
Washington	19	18	.514	2½
Charlotte	20	19	.513	2½
Orlando	16	23	.410	6½
Miami	11	29	.275	12

Central Division

Cleveland	28	9	.757	—
Indiana	20	18	.526	8½
Milwaukee	19	18	.514	9
Chicago	19	20	.487	10
Detroit	18	22	.450	11½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	Southwest Division	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	30	8	.789	—	
Houston	31	9	.775	—	
Memphis	24	16	.600	7	
New Orleans	15	24	.385	15½	
Dallas	11	27	.389	19	

Northwest Division

Utah	24	16	.600	—
Oklahoma City	23	16	.590	½
Portland	17	23	.425	7
Denver	14	23	.378	8½
Minnesota	12	26	.316	11

Pacific Division

Golden State	33	6	.846	—</td
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JEM Company Ltd./Mobil Basketball League Opening

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Edward and Jovita Flores lead the ceremonial toss between TanHoldings 1 and GPPC during the opening of the 2017 JEM Company Ltd./Mobil Customer Appreciation Basketball League last Sunday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.



Westco players are joined by their muse in the opening ceremony.



Five Triple J Motors players attend the opening ceremony.



Joeten Enterprise players and their supporter pose for a photo.



Best Deal/RNV Construction players pose with their muse.



GPPC players with their muse pose for a photo.



DeRozan
powers Raptors
to comeback
win over Celtics

PAGE 24

28 THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 2017

Saipan Tribune Sports

Broadway Brock?
Can Osweiler lead
Texans to historic
upset

PAGE 25



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Ol'Aces, Ace enter Final Four

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Ol'Aces and Ace Hardware took the first two Final Four seats in the Mariana Islands Basketball Federation's Inaugural Men's Outdoor League after eliminating their respective opponents last Tuesday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The top-seeded Ace Hardware moved into the Final Four following a 65-55 victory over the Junior Ol'Aces, while the Ol'Aces followed suit, thanks to their 93-68 domination of 5-Star Construction in the second playoff game.

The Ol'Aces set up the easy win after they started to pull away in the second quarter, which began with the team just ahead by 6, 20-14.

Jesus Iguel helped the Ol'Aces widen the gap, scoring 12 points in the second canto. Freddie Pelisamen and Dan Barcina also did their share, combining for the Ol'Aces' last 9 markers in the first half to hand their team a 50-32 advantage at the break.

At the resumption of the match, the Ol'Aces kept going

See OL'ACES on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
McDonald's players practice at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield yesterday in preparation for the new season of the Saipan Little League Baseball.

this season so we have a lot of coaches," said Pangelinan.

The Pirates had one team last season and missed the playoffs.

"Of course, the goal this season is to make it to the playoffs. However, we are just

See SLLB on Page 26



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

You know the new season of Saipan Little League Baseball is forthcoming when you see players with their bats and gloves getting off from their cars and heading to the baseball and softball fields at the Oleai Sports Complex after school hours.

"We're getting ready for the new season," said McDonald's assistant coach Anthony Tenorio, who picked up some of their Major division players and brought them to the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Ballfield yesterday for their training session.

"We've been practicing since September," added Anthony, who along with his younger brother and the team's head coach Patrick, conducted warm-up throwing

and catching drills yesterday with the first batch of players that arrived at the field.

McDonald's has 14 players on its Major squad and seven of them are holdovers from last year's squad.

"We were the last ones to make it to the playoffs last year, so hopefully we will have a better position this season. There are seven players returning this year and their experience will be a big factor in our campaign this season. Hopefully, we will have better and wiser players," said Anthony, whose players train twice a week or every Wednesday and Friday with each session lasting for two hours.

McDonald's took the field from the Pirates, who had Gus Pangelinan leading the group's practice yesterday.

"The Pirates have two teams

Youth bikers lead Siheky Ride finishers

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Youth bikers Rhenmer Remilosa and J.C. Ferrer were among the top finishers in Pacific Island Club's Southside Siheky Ride held last Saturday.

In the boys short course (18K), Rhenmer Remilosa won the three-way fight for first place after clocking in at 51:33. He was also the top overall finisher in the short course, while Wynn Brillo and Taiga Sato rounded out the Top 3 in the division after checking in at 52:50 and 59:01, respectively.

J.C. Ferrer was the lone



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
5-Star Construction's Angelo Fernando, left, and the Ol'Aces Dan Barcina battle for the rebound, while Michael Cabanas stays close in the play during the third quarter of their playoff game in the MIBF outdoor caging last Tuesday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
J.C. Ferrer, left, and her father Bob head to the finish line of last Saturday's Pacific Island Club's Southside Siheky Ride in San Antonio.

(1:19:01), Vernice Runda (1:19:18), and Mei Rengil (1:22:01).

In the men's short course, Fred Remilosa broke the one-hour barrier to finish ahead of 32 other bikers in the division. Remilosa logged 52:51 to land the top spot, while Butch Sublemente and Ding Ramos completed the podium finish. Sublemente and Ramos also capped the race under one hour after registering 55:00 and 57:50, respectively.

Meanwhile, the Siheddy Ride that is named after PIC's mascot, which is a caricature of the nearly extinct Micronesian Kingfisher, also featured a long course (32K).

See YOUTH on Page 26